Bundle Name: Promoting Comfort in Labor

Readiness

*Every unit*

- Incorporates into its maternity services midwifery care that is responsive to women’s needs and preferences.¹
- Provides specific training for all intrapartum nurses on providing labor support in 4 recognized categories: physical support, emotional support, advocacy, and informational support.²
- Provides a policy, clinical protocol, or guideline that outlines the uniqueness of the experience of labor and emphasizes that ongoing assessment and caring activities should focus on support and comfort measures to assist a woman to cope with labor, e.g., freedom of movement, hydrotherapy, nutrition and hydration in labor, and use of non-pharmacologic pain management techniques.³,⁴
- Adopt guidelines that promote continuous one-to-one supportive care for women in active labor by a trained individual such as a doula or registered nurse.⁵,⁶
- Assure availability of equipment and an environment that promotes non-pharmacologic methods of coping with and comfort in labor, such as dim lighting, birth/exercise balls, rocking chairs, squat bars, birthing stools, heat packs, hydrotherapy, etc.⁷
- Assure availability of evidence-based, prenatal preparation in pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic methods of coping in labor and birth.⁸

Risk and Appropriateness Assessment

*Every woman in labor*

- Is assessed for comfort and coping (rather than pain) upon admission and per unit policy throughout the labor and birth process.³,⁴
- Receives information about non-pharmacologic pain management and assistance with comfort and coping.
- Is assessed for preferences related to comfort and coping, including intended use or nonuse of pharmacologic pain management.
- Engages in shared decision making about whether and when to use pharmacologic pain management based on possible harms and benefits and the woman’s conditions, values, and preferences.⁹-¹¹
Reliable Delivery of Appropriate Care

*Every woman whose current intention is to labor without pharmacologic pain management*

- Receives encouragement to remain upright during labor and birth as desired and is encouraged to ambulate and change positions without restriction during labor.\(^{12,13}\)
- In active labor receives continuous labor support by a midwife, nurse, and/or doula.\(^{1,5,6}\)
- Has access to a range of non-pharmacologic comfort measure options, including hydrotherapy, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS), massage, birth balls, and relaxation techniques.\(^7\)
- Receives clear communication that includes her partner and family in the process of shared decision making.\(^{9,10}\)

Recognition and Response

*Every woman who is not coping or who intends to use pharmacologic pain management*

- Receives non-pharmacologic comfort and support measures until pharmacologic pain management is in place and as a complement to pharmacologic pain management as needed.\(^7\)
- Along with her partner/support companions continues to receive emotional, physical, and informational support and advocacy.\(^2\)
- Continues to be assessed for comfort and coping (rather than pain) regularly throughout labor.\(^3,4\)
- Continues to be encouraged to move and change positions within bounds of safety.\(^{14,15}\)

Reporting/Systems Learning

*Every unit*

- Documents annual nurse competency in use of labor support and non-pharmacologic comfort and coping measures.\(^5\)
- Provides ongoing/continuing staff education related to labor support and non-pharmacologic comfort and coping measures on an annual basis. New staff receive training in providing labor support in four recognized categories: physical support, emotional support, advocacy, and informational support within 60 days of hire.\(^2,5\)
- Documents labor support in four recognized categories in patient electronic health record.\(^2\)
- Collects data on the number of women who receive narcotic, nitrous oxide, or epidural pain relief.
- Implements maternal experience surveys that include questions regarding comfort and coping in labor.\(^{16}\)
References


