

Ways that others may help during Second Stage

Warm Compress: As the perineal muscles begin to lengthen, some practitioners will place a warm compress on the perineum to soothe the stretching muscles. This can help the mom focus on where to push.

Mirror: Some people find it helpful to see their progress as they push the baby out and seeing that with each push they are able to see more of their own baby's head and that can give them hope and confidence to keep going. Some people find it very gratifying to see that every push brings them closer to the end, although others may feel that actually seeing in addition to experiencing is just too much stimulation and info.

Pressing or tapping the perineal muscles: Some providers may place two fingers just within the perineum and press down and ask the mother to push against their fingers, this helps them focus on getting the baby down and out.

Perineal massage: Practitioners may gently stretch the perineal muscle as the baby comes down and add oil to ease the passage.

As the baby's head is crowning, many providers gently massage or apply counterpressure to muscle tissue that needs support to prevent possible tearing.

Guiding you to touch the baby's head: Assist the mother to put her hand down and she has the joy of escorting the baby out with the OB/midwife.

Support, encouragement, cheering: Encouragement and reassurance is as important now as it was during the 1st Stage of labor. If the excitement and energy in the room becomes confusing and loud, have the room be quiet so that the mother can listen to one person in the room - the OB or midwife who can offer direct calm feedback and guidance.

To avoid "purple pushing", encourage the mom to exhale, to continue to bear down while exhaling, and to start again once she has caught her breath.

Calm focus: Many OB's and midwives provide consistent reassurance and guidance, helping you to push effectively and keep you focused.

Slow birth of the baby's head: Ask the mother to pant or blow to slow her pushing as the baby's head crowns. Because the contraction continues to push the baby out, one doesn't need to add additional power by bearing down and this will allow the provider to support the perineal muscles.

Panting or blowing can help slow a very fast labor and is also helpful if the mother needs to rest or regroup.

I wish you a healthy and easeful delivery!