

## Six Healthy Birth Practices\*

(From material produced by Lamaze International: [www.lamaze.org](http://www.lamaze.org))

### [Let Labor Begin on Its Own](#)

“Labor is a set of complex, interacting components. Alteration of the natural process can expose a woman and her baby to unneeded risks”

### [Walk, Move Around, and Change Positions Throughout Labor](#)

“Free movement during labor allows a woman to manage contractions and assist the baby’s rotation and movement through the pelvis.”

### [Bring a Loved One, Friend, or Doula for Continuous Support](#)

“Current research supports the benefits of continuous emotional and physical support during labor.”

### [Avoid Interventions That Are Not Medically Necessary](#)

“Supporting the natural, normal, physiologic process of birth requires clear medical indications prior to any medical intervention.”

### [Avoid Giving Birth on Your Back and Follow Your Body’s Urges to Push](#)

“Allowing a woman to find positions of comfort and encouraging her to push in response to what she feels is beneficial to the birth process.”

### [Keep Mother and Baby Together—It’s Best for Mother, Baby, and Breastfeeding](#)

“When a baby is kept with the mother, there are physiological benefits to both, including the facilitation of breastfeeding.”

*My own short description of the care practices using more direct language would be:*

1. *Avoid induction.*
2. *Stay out of bed. Move around a lot!*
3. *Hire a doula.*
4. *Demand individualized care—no interventions that are “just because” or “hospital policy.”*
5. *Squat, kneel, or get on all fours to push.*
6. *Breastfeed your baby early and often! Keep your baby with you and do not let hospital staff separate you from your baby because of routines or policies.*

\*Lamaze International, [www.lamaze.org](http://www.lamaze.org). Each care practice has an accompanying exhaustively referenced explanatory paper that is available for free download on their website.