



Nurturing Your Journey

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A GUIDE FROM MY DOULA DAWN

Secrets to an *Easier* Birth

5 Proven Strategies You Need to Know

Birth doesn't have to be a chaotic, painful, or scary experience. With the right knowledge and preparation, you can stack the odds in your favor for an easier birth — whether you're planning a natural birth, an epidural, or even a C-section.

THE 5 STRATEGIES

- ✦ Get baby in an optimal position
- ✦ Work with contractions, not against them
- ✦ Move your body to keep labor progressing
- ✦ Avoid the "cascade of interventions"
- ✦ Build a strong support team

STRATEGY 1

Get Baby in an Optimal Position

The position of your baby during labor can make all the difference.

♦ WHY IT MATTERS

- ♦ A well-positioned baby means a shorter labor and easier pushing.
- ♦ A poorly positioned baby can mean back labor, stalled progress, and more interventions.

♦ HOW TO ENCOURAGE A GOOD POSITION

- ☐ Spend time on hands and knees — great for posterior babies
- ☐ Avoid reclining positions, especially in the third trimester
- ☐ Use [Spinning Babies techniques](#) to optimize baby's position
- ☐ Pelvic tilts & deep squats to create more space

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** *If labor is slow, changing positions can help baby rotate. Don't underestimate how much a simple shift — hands and knees, a lunge, a side-lying release — can do.*

STRATEGY 2

Work With Contractions, Not Against Them

Tension equals more pain. The more you resist a contraction, the harder labor feels.

♦ HOW TO WORK WITH CONTRACTIONS

- ☐ Breathe deeply instead of tensing up
- ☐ Use low, deep vocalizations — moaning, not screaming
- ☐ Stay upright & mobile instead of lying on your back
- ☐ Relax your jaw & hands — it helps the pelvic floor relax, too

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** Tension is often more painful than the contraction itself. If you catch yourself clenching, soften your jaw first — the rest of your body tends to follow.

STRATEGY 3

Move Your Body to Keep Labor Progressing

Lying in bed can slow labor and make contractions feel more painful.

✦ BETTER MOVEMENT OPTIONS

- ☐ Walking or swaying during early labor
- ☐ Squatting, lunging, or using a birth ball during active labor
- ☐ Hands-and-knees or side-lying if you're tired but need progress
- ☐ Using a peanut ball if you have an epidural

When to switch positions:

- ✦ Contractions slow down or get irregular
- ✦ Back labor is intense (hands-and-knees can help!)
- ✦ Pushing is taking a long time

Why it works:

- ✦ Changing positions can help baby rotate and move down.

✦ **Dawn's Tip:** Your pelvis moves differently in each position — try a few different ones and see what feels best. There's no single "right" way to labor.

STRATEGY 4

Avoid the "Cascade of Interventions"

One small intervention often leads to more. Understanding this can help you make informed choices.

♦ THE CASCADE LOOKS LIKE THIS

♦ Induction → Intense Contractions → Epidural → Labor Stalls → Pitocin → More Stress on Baby → C-Section

♦ WAYS TO REDUCE UNNECESSARY INTERVENTIONS

- ☐ Let labor start on its own, if safe to do so
- ☐ Try natural labor induction methods first (walking, sex, relaxation)
- ☐ If labor slows, use movement instead of Pitocin when possible
- ☐ Ask questions before saying yes — is this necessary? What are my options?

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** Not all interventions are bad. The key is understanding the risks, benefits, and alternatives before you say yes — not after.

STRATEGY 5

Build a Strong Support Team

The #1 thing that improves birth outcomes? Having the right people supporting you.

♦ WHO SHOULD BE ON YOUR TEAM

- ♦ A provider who respects your choices (OB or midwife)
- ♦ A doula — proven to reduce C-section rates and improve birth experiences
- ♦ A partner who knows how to advocate for you in labor
- ♦ Supportive family or friends who don't bring fear or negativity

♦ WHY SUPPORT MATTERS

- ♦ Continuous labor support reduces C-sections by 25–39%.
- ♦ Having a doula lowers the need for epidurals & Pitocin.
- ♦ A supportive birth team increases satisfaction with birth — no matter what happens.

♦ **Birth is unpredictable, but preparation helps.** Even if things don't go exactly as planned, these 5 strategies can make labor and birth smoother, less painful, and more empowering. Which one will you focus on first?

Work with Dawn: Visit mydouladawn.com to book a free 15-minute call or learn more about doula support for your birth.