

Guide to Cervical Dilation



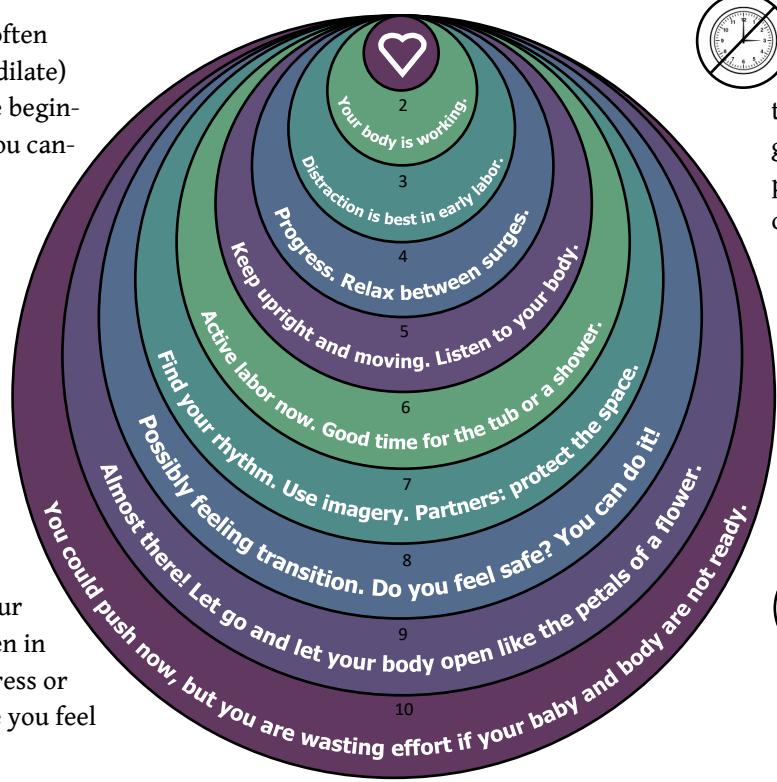
The cervix must soften (efface) and open (dilate) around baby's head at the beginning of the birth canal. You cannot see this opening.



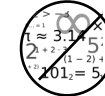
Openness is determined in cm by the caregiver's fingers and is subjective. There is no reason you need to know this number.



Sphincter Law: Your cervix will not open in the presence of stress or adrenaline. Birth where you feel safest.



It's not a clock. It could take a long time to get to 5 and minutes to get to 10. How you feel and the position of baby can affect speed of dilation.



Do not perform labor math. (See above.) Let your baby do all the work; thinking too much activates your neo-cortex and hampers your hormones.



Though very fancy, your cervix is not a crystal ball. It will never tell you how soon your baby will be born.

Note: Vaginal exams may be uncomfortable and/or have a detrimental effect on your emotional state. Frequent exams are not beneficial.

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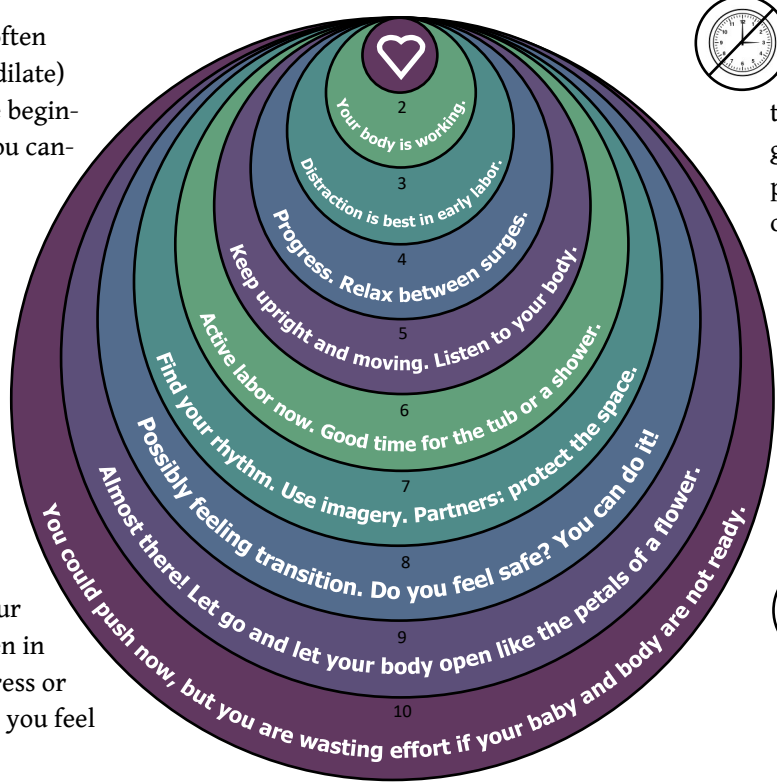
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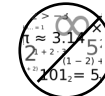
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