

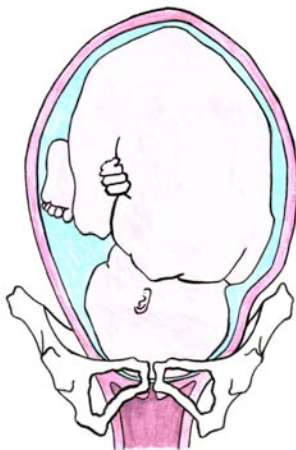


Turn Baby Turn!

– How to get your baby into the best possible position for birth.

In the third trimester you and your baby are preparing for birth, in most cases the baby will instinctively turn itself into a head down position with the back of its head and spine at the front of your bump. This is called the occiput anterior position (OA) which allows the easiest passage of the baby's head and body through the birth canal.

Occiput Anterior (OA)



There are things you can do in the third trimester to help your baby get into or to maintain this position:

- Don't slouch! Try to always sit with your knees lower than your hips, letting the weight of your bump hang forward. Sitting on a birth ball in your last month of pregnancy is not only comfortable, but helps to achieve this position.
- Stay as active as you can, Swimming is the best exercise for helping a baby into the OA position, as gravity will pull the baby's spine around to the front of the uterus, walking is also good exercise.
- Try and avoid long car journeys, especially if the car has bucket seats.

Some babies need a little help getting into the OA position and may, despite your best efforts, lie in the breech or occiput posterior (back to back) position.

Occiput Posterior (back to back)



Breech



It may be that your pelvis is malaligned; this causes uneven tightening of the ligaments which support the uterus, reducing the space available for the baby to turn into the OA position.

Chiropractic treatment can help with foetal positioning by assessment and adjustment of the pelvic bones and massage of the ligaments in order to create space for the baby to turn.

Once your pelvic joints are well aligned, you can do specific exercises to gently stretch your uterine ligaments and use gravity to help your baby to turn.

The all 4's position is ideal for OP babies



The knee to chest inversion helps breech babies to flip over into a head down position



Ask your chiropractor or midwife if these positions would be suitable for you to try.

During Labour

During labour a lot of babies change position so if you are told your baby is posterior, or even if the position is good, it is worth trying to maintain upright forward leaning postures in labour. These may be kneeling over a birth ball, against a sofa or bed, on all fours or leaning on your partner.



And, yes the research does back this up! Labouring in these postures can increase the pelvic diameter by as much as 20% and women using these postures experience less tearing, stronger contractions, and fewer operative deliveries.

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