



# Hydrotherapy in Labor

Hydrotherapy is a form of labor pain management.

Hydrotherapy is the use of a deep-water tub for full-body immersion during labor. The water may have a soothing, calming effect which can help you relax during labor. It may also reduce your pain which may decrease the need for medical intervention during labor. If you have taken pain medicines, such as IV meds or epidural, you cannot use the tub at the same time because you will need to be monitored and in bed if you choose those options.

Hydrotherapy in labor is not for water birth. You will have to step out of the tub to deliver your baby.



## Potential Benefits of Hydrotherapy in Labor

- Shorter labor and decreased use of epidural.
- Less pain and more comfort and relaxation.
- Increased sense of control and privacy.
- More positive birth experience.
- Less production of stress hormone.
- Weightlessness and increased support to all body surfaces.
- Easier to move into a variety of positions due to floating in the water.
- Support of perineal tissue and relaxed pelvic floor muscles.
- Better blood circulation and more oxygen to the baby.



## If You are Considering Hydrotherapy

It is important to discuss whether you meet the criteria with your health care provider. In order to use hydrotherapy during labor, you must:

- Have a low-risk pregnancy.
- Not have a medical condition.
- Not have had a previous cesarean section.
- Not be pregnant with twins.
- Have a gestational age between 37.0 and 41.6 weeks.
- Have a normal fetal heart rate.
- Not have a baby in a breech position.
- Not have abnormalities with your placenta.
- Not have any complications with your baby.
- Not have a fever, infection, or meconium.
- Not be receiving Pitocin.

## Hydrotherapy Eligibility

To qualify for hydrotherapy, you must:

- Be a patient of Eisner Health (or affiliated clinic) and have complete records if transferring from another clinic.
- Have discussed your plan with an Eisner Health midwife at a routine prenatal visit or during a "Meet the Midwife" visit if receiving care at an affiliated clinic.
- Have attended the "Eisner Health Hydrotherapy Class".
- Be able to easily get in and out of tub.
- Have purchased a personal water kit.

## Labor Support

You are required to have a labor support person to help set up, clean up and dispose of the water kit. The labor support person may be your partner or a doula. A doula is a professional trained in childbirth who provides emotional, physical, and educational support to a person who is pregnant, is experiencing labor, or has recently given birth.

## Hydrotherapy Kit

- Please do not purchase a kit before having a conversation with an Eisner Health midwife.
- You can purchase kits at [waterbirthsolutions.com](http://waterbirthsolutions.com) or a different retailer. The kit you purchase must include an inflatable tub, disposable liner, water hose with a connector that fits a standard faucet, air pump, water drainage pump, net, and thermometer. You must take the kit with you to the hospital.

## For More Information

- To start prenatal care at the Eisner Women's Health Center, please call (213) 747-5542.
- For insurance eligibility information and transfer of care to Eisner Health, please call (213) 742-5542, ext. 3358.
- To register for the Eisner Health Hydrotherapy Class or other prenatal classes, contact (213) 747-5542, ext. 3506, or e-mail [pregnata.ed@eisnerhealth.org](mailto:pregnata.ed@eisnerhealth.org)

## Additional Resources

[acog.org](http://acog.org) (search for Immersion in Water During Labor and Delivery)

[mana.org](http://mana.org) (search for Waterbirth Position Paper)

[onlinelibrary.wiley.com](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com) (search for Using Water for Labor and Birth)



### Eisner Women's Health Center

1513 S. Grand Avenue, Suite 220 and 250, Los Angeles, CA 90015