

Partner Massage for labour

NurtureLife® Massage for Labour supports the birth of Ava

By Catherine McInerney - Director, Pregnancy Massage Australia



During pregnancy, massage can offer a world of relief! Mums-to-be who receive massage treatment from our NurtureLife® Practitioners are offered not just relaxation but relief from their pregnancy discomforts as their body adjusts to the many changes occurring. Mums who receive massage during their pregnancy become very receptive to utilising massage as a tool to reduce pain in labour and recognise “how to let the pain go” by using various techniques to create a positive feedback response, which means a distraction from the painful stimuli of contractions.

I have assisted many couples to utilise NurtureLife® Massage for Labour as a tool to reduce the intensity of contractions as the labour progresses. The key is the type of massage touch used and how it connects the labouring woman with her baby and birth support partner.

Research has proven the benefits of massage in labour to reduce pain, and with guided educated preparation this can be used as a drug-free approach to pain management in labour. Studies in America have shown a group of women receiving massage in labour reported a feeling of reduced pain and the pain was more manageable in their labour with massage. (T. Field).

The pregnancy massage services mentioned were provided by Pregnancy Massage Australia®. PMA specialise in pregnancy massage and partner training, and teach supportive massage techniques for labour with a focus on pain management and relief. A well-trained partner will have a wonderful supportive role during the pregnancy and labour. A lot of time is spent preparing the nursery, however reflective time needs to be spent preparing the body for the changes through pregnancy and the birth itself.

Vikki & Andrew’s story - Welcoming Ava

“At 38.3 weeks pregnant with my first baby, I was awoken by labour cramps at 3am one morning. My contractions remained a constant 5 minutes apart and slowly built in intensity over the next 6 hours as I laboured at home. My husband was hands-on during this time, applying the appropriate pressure of massage to slowly ease the pain away. I was able to remain calm which also helped Andrew to stay focused on what he needed to do to help me.

In between last minute packing, my husband ran back and forth to apply some counter pressure and massage techniques on my lower back (which we learnt in our Massage for Labour session) to take the edge off the contractions. It was amazing how much relief this provided me with and as a result, allowed my labour to progress without inhibitions.

My labour had progressed so much that upon admission into hospital, the midwife advised me I was fully dilated at 10cm and ready to push! After some, ok; a lot of pushing, in the last 15 minutes of labour, our little cherub Ava was born!”

I asked Vikki some questions about her experiences during Ava’s birth. Her answers demonstrate the power of NurtureLife® Massage in Labour.

How did you feel the massage helped you in your pregnancy?

I cherished being pregnant, felt rejuvenated and incredibly nurtured having the pregnancy massage through NurtureLife®.

What was the benefit of attending the NurtureLife® Partner Training – Massage for Labour session?

After attending the NurtureLife® Partner Training - Massage for Labour session, my partner and I felt more comfortable in the birthing process overall. In particular, my husband Andrew felt more comfortable with how he could assist with pain management at each stage of labour and also he knew what to do between contractions!

How did this help in your labour – did Andrew feel he supported you well with the labour massage?

The information gained from the Labour Massage session helped me immensely during my labour. I have no doubt my experience would have been very different otherwise. We felt equipped with natural ways to manage pain, nausea and even nerves!