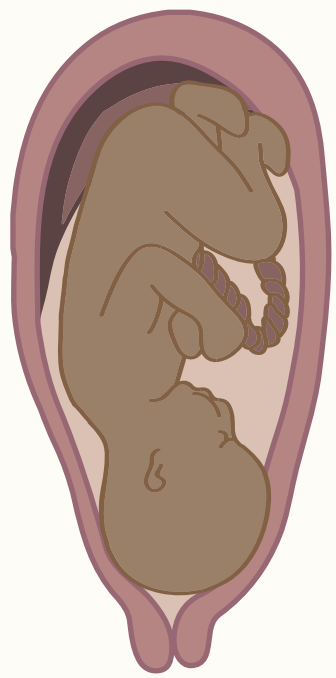


THE STAGES OF LABOR

from baby's perspective

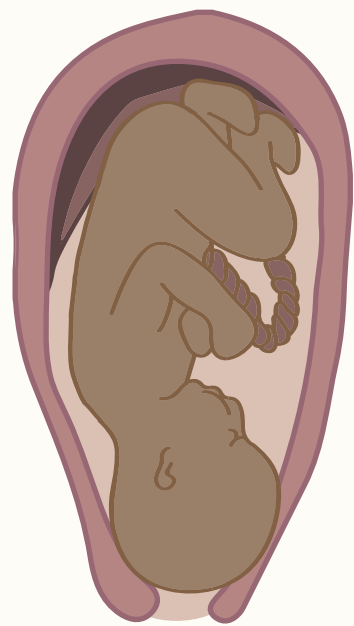
STAGE 1

"ripening" of the cervix



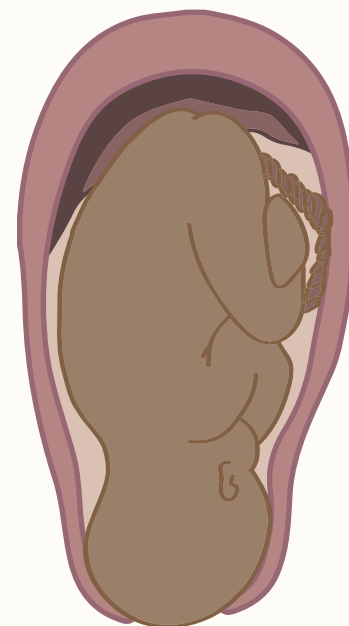
PRELABOR

Mom's cervix is thick and firm, not yet in labor. Mom may feel contractions at this time. It's best for mom to keep "doing life" as normal until more signs of labor occur.



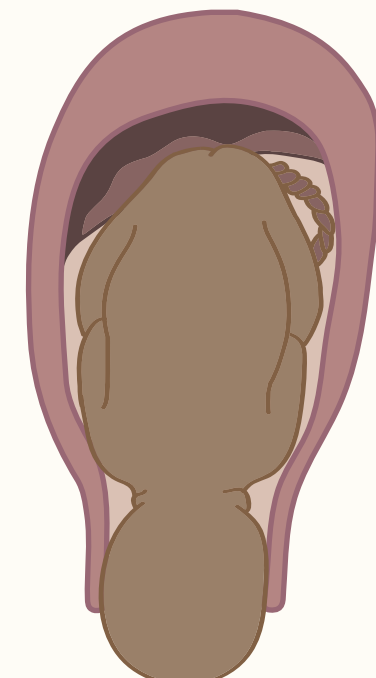
EARLY LABOR

Mom's cervix is soft and beginning to dilate. Contractions become closer. Mom benefits from food and drink, distractions, and establishing a rhythm (breathing, mantra, etc.).



ACTIVE LABOR

The cervix continues to dilate and contractions are longer and more intense. Quiet, privacy, freedom of movement and vocalization are great for mom at this time.

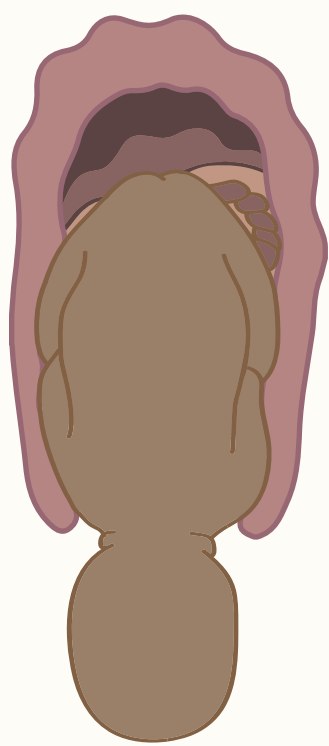


TRANSITION

The cervix becomes fully dilated and baby's head goes from the uterus to the vagina. Mom likely feels the "urge to push." Calm encouragement and keeping the earlier rhythm helps her.

STAGE 2

pushing out baby



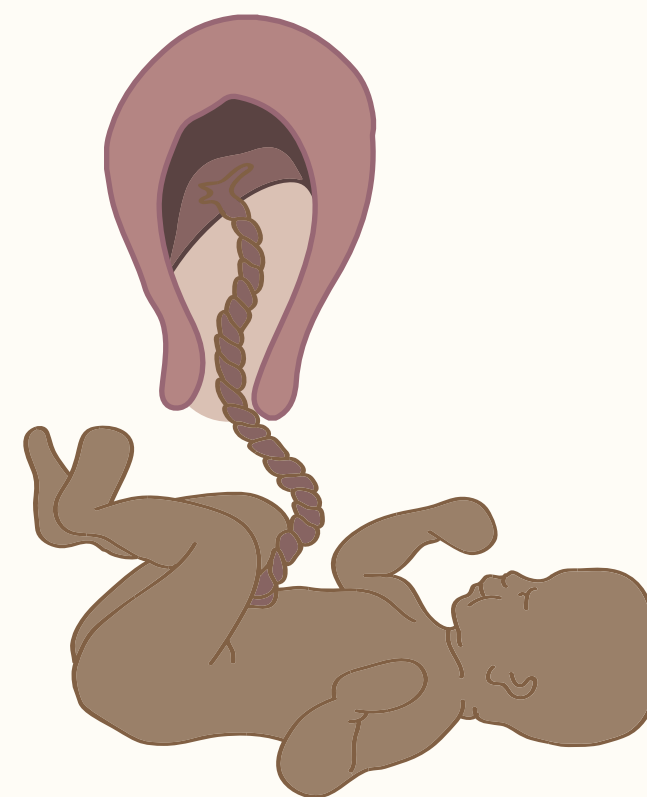
RESTING PHASE

A "pause" in labor, which not all mothers experience. Baby's head is out of the uterus, in the birth canal. Mom shouldn't be rushed if she experiences this. It's a lovely time for rest and support.



DESCENT

Contractions and "urge to push" return. Baby's head is through the birth canal and is visible at the vagina. The best positions for mom are semi-sitting, lying on a side, hands and knees, or squatting.



BIRTH

Begins when baby's head is visible at the vagina between contractions and ends when baby is born. Protecting mom's perineum and seeing to baby's vital signs are significant at this time.

Information in this infographic comes from: *The Birth Partner*, by Penny Simkin, P.T.