

# Pain Relief in Labour: Video transcript

## Pain Relief Options – Hypnotherapy

Hello. My name is Dr. Sabrina Kuah. I am a consultant obstetrician at the Women's and Children's Hospital.

Hypnosis is a focused state of mind that helps women to respond to sensations and feelings during childbirth in a helpful way.

During this time some women will be deeply relaxed while others will stay quite alert. Whether women are deeply relaxed or alert they frequently have an increased ability to cope and stay in control no matter what else is happening.

Hypnotic suggestions are given during antenatal hypnosis training or labour to improve the ability of women to experience labour and childbirth in a way that is as comfortable and safe as possible.

For example a woman may be able to experience contractions as a means of getting them closer to seeing her baby instead of as a sensation of pain and suffering to be feared.

The woman's perception of time may be changed so that the rests between contractions can seem much longer than they really are and the contractions themselves can seem much shorter.

Research suggests that hypnotherapy reduces anxiety and pain, but it has not been shown to reduce the need for pain relieving medication. Like any effective therapy there are side effects.

These may include disorientation, and an increased responsiveness to inadvertent negative comments.

Hypnotherapy should be avoided by women with a history of psychosis. There is no evidence that it causes any harm to the baby.

Hypnotherapy is most successfully used when practiced during pregnancy.

There are a number of hypnotherapy practitioners who are able to teach women and their support person the skills necessary.

For a list of practitioners please go to the 'Further Information' section.



Some obstetricians and midwives at The Women's and Children's Hospital are trained in the use of hypnotherapy.

The hospital is unable, however, to guarantee a trained clinician will be available during a labour.