



### **Laboring with Few or No Pain Medicines**

Many women desire to labor and give birth with few or no pain medicines. Talk to your nurse and provider about what options are safe for you and your baby. Here are some helpful hints.

- Before labor, talk with your support person about your thoughts and plan about pain management in labor. Please have this talk before you come to the hospital.
- Consider using a doula to help you in labor. You can use your own private doula, or request a doula through the UNC Volunteer Doula program.
- Communicate your wishes to your provider and to the other staff. One way to do this is to write a birth plan or complete the UNC Baby's *Birth Day Wishes*. Remember that a birth plan is a guide and can be changed.
- Once your labor has begun, talk to your provider about when you should come to hospital. Until you come to the hospital you can walk around, drink lots of fluids and use other comfort measures. In the beginning of labor, relaxation and breathing exercises can be helpful.
- Once you get to the hospital stay active by walking around as long as it is safe for you and baby. The hospital has monitors that you can wear while you are walking. If you are in bed, change positions at least every 30 minutes.
- Some women find music very soothing in labor. There are music channels available on the hospital televisions that you can use. You may also bring your own music player.
- In the hospital, there are birthing balls, showers or bathtubs, squat bars, and birthing stools. If you are interested in using any of these, or have questions about them, talk to the Labor and Delivery staff.
- Tell your labor and delivery nurse and provider you will let them know if and when you want pain medication

**Finally....Have confidence in yourself. Labor is powerful and usually painful, but there are resting periods. Take one contraction at a time. Rest and relax between each one. Be kind to yourself. Focus on the baby you will soon be holding!**