

# Things you can do to Reduce the Chance of Tearing

## Kegel Exercises

These exercises strengthen the vaginal muscles and get you in touch with where these muscles are when it comes time to relax this area at delivery. They should be done all during your pregnancy, 100 times a day start now!!

What you do –consciously tightened your vaginal muscles and hold for a count to ten, then release. Do this 10 times you think of it. It is a good idea to place a finger, organ, or get Dad to help, in the vagina and squeeze on that tighten till you get a feel for it. The Kegel muscles are the ones you use when you stop the flow of urine. They are important throughout your life in maintaining continence and for sexual enjoyment.

There are devices that help doing Kegel exercises ask me for more information. or go to web site [www.kegalmaster2000.com](http://www.kegalmaster2000.com)

## Tailor Sitting

This position also strengthens and stretches those muscles involved in delivery. Sit on the floor holding your feet and rock gently back and forth. Do this anytime you are just sitting (i.e. watching TV, folding laundry, etc)

## Vitamin E and Perineal Massage

This Vitamin Promotes elasticity in the skin and is crucial to not tearing. Vitamin E (400 I.U.) Can be applied directly to the perineum by a gentle massage motion ( firm center to out) using just the first two fingers. Do this everyday the last month of your pregnancy. Consciously relax as you are massaging. ( I have a handouts which explains this procedure if you think you are interested.)

Vitamin E (400 I.U. ) should also be taken orally for the last six weeks.

Good nutrition and having a good hematocrit are also important for the overall health of your tissues.

## During Labor

Cervix must be fully dilated to 10 cm. before you begin pushing so that it is not torn or becomes swollen. If you feel the urge to push, but are not fully dilated, PANT!! This will stop the pushing tendency.

During crowning, slow expulsion of the head is very important. If you feel any burning or tingling sensation of the perineum, be sure and tell us! PANTING (like a dog) will slow down the baby's descent.

**NOTE:** We will use massage and warm compresses to promote good circulation to the perineum during delivery, as well as perineal support, flexion of the baby's head , and careful delivery of the presenting shoulder to prevent tearing.