

Head Down: Breech Babies and Hypnosis

Alisha Tamburri, CCHT, MH



It's late in your third trimester. You've been hoping and planning for a vaginal birth, and never thought much about delivering via cesarean - until your OB or midwife does a scan and tells you your baby is breech.

Now what? Suddenly your plans to 'rest and nest' in preparation for your newborn's arrival are pushed aside. You read everything you can find about chiropractic techniques, acupuncture, moxibustion, external cephalic version (ECV) and even standing on your head in a swimming pool (Who comes up with these ideas?), desperately searching for a way to get your baby to turn.

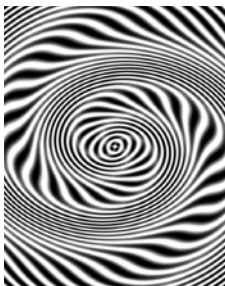
You might not read about a method for encouraging babies to turn that I've used successfully in my practice for more than 30 years - hypnotherapy. Hypnosis can help loosen tight muscles in your uterus, release stress, and calm your body and your baby.

An integral part of the breech turn session is fear release therapy, where moms learn to let go of their fears concerning their pregnancy, labor, parenting, and even the stress of dealing with in-laws.

Of course, many mothers-to-be also have strong feelings upon learning their baby is breech - some feel angry, disappointed, depressed, nervous or scared. Some are terrified contemplating the possibility that they may have a surgical birth. Quite often mothers-to-be confide in me that they feel they must have done something 'wrong,' and I quickly assure them that this is NOT the truth. While the primary goal of a breech session is encouraging the baby to turn, I also work to help mothers feel more relaxed and peaceful about their upcoming birth, no

matter how they eventually deliver, so they can focus on the joy of meeting and holding their newborn.

The use of hypnosis to help turn breech babies was supported in a groundbreaking 1994 study presented by Dr. Lewis Mehl-Madrona. The study included 200 women who were carrying their babies in a breech position at 36 weeks gestation or more. The experimental group of 100 women received hypnotherapy from a trained practitioner. The comparison group of 100 did not receive hypnotherapy, although some did ECV, a procedure where the baby is manually manipulated from outside the abdomen to bring about the downward turn.



While in hypnosis, the mothers in the experimental group were led through guided imagery to bring about deep relaxation. They were helped to imagine their uterus becoming pliable and relaxed in order to allow their babies sufficient room to make a move. Suggestions were then given to visualize their babies effortlessly turning into the proper vertex position for birthing. Each mother was asked to talk to her baby. The hypnotherapist verbally encouraged the baby to release from the breech position, turning downward for a gentle birth.

The result? 81 of the 100 breech babies in the experimental group turned spontaneously. In the group that did not receive hypnotherapy, only 26 babies turned, and an additional 20 turned after ECV.

Hypnosis is natural state of focused awareness that we all have within ourselves. All hypnosis is self-hypnosis;

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know how lucky I am that cesareans exist? No matter the answers, I feel okay with not knowing.

One thing I do know is that in no way am I less of a woman, or less of a mother, because I birthed my son and daughter via cesarean. And while I believe that “healthy baby, healthy mother” comes first, I know that they are not the only things that matter. It turns out that it mattered to feel that my birth “experience,” not just the statistical outcome, were important to my care team, and it mattered that I felt good about myself when all was said and done. I do feel good about myself. My second cesarean turned out to be a second chance, and I have no regrets about my choice to let go.

The Latch continued

If you feel stabbing or burning pain in your breasts or when your baby latches.

If you have cracked or bleeding nipples.

If your latch is not painful, but your baby is not producing a good amount of wet and dirty diapers.

Jessica Martin-Weber is a writer, speaker and creator of TheLeakyBoob.com. In just four years, The Leaky Boob has become the world's largest online interactive breastfeeding resource, recommended to mothers by several major hospital networks and health agencies. Jessica is a mother to six fiercely independent daughters and also blogs with her husband, Jeremy, at BeyondMoi.com.

Our Lives As Dads continued

“Another tip for the guys: Your wife is always right. When she's pregnant, she's always right.”

– Brian White

(Film and TV actor and producer)

“My Life As A Dad” is filmed in the Parent Family Network Studio in the South Bay.

You can subscribe to “My Life As A Dad” on YouTube, or by visiting www.mylifeasadad.com.

I am proud of all the fathers and fathers-to-be who have shared their feelings and experiences with me and my audience on “My Life As A Dad.” It's a show created by dads, for dads. I hope you'll watch, learn and enjoy.

Robert Nickell is the founder and CEO of Daddy & Company, the creator of DaddyScrubs, and a well-known syndicated columnist for national newspapers, parenting magazines and websites. He is also the Executive Producer and host of “My Life As A Father,” and a very proud dad to children Austin, Paige, Hayden, Kennady, Lincoln, Carter, and Tessa.

Head Down continued

the hypnotherapist serves as a guide. The power is truly yours! It is inspiring to witness a mother become at peace with herself, her body and baby using only the incredible power of her own mind – a power they often don't know they possess until they come into my office.

I give moms a recording of their session to listen to every day. This repetition helps mothers maintain the calm state they achieved in hypnotherapy, and encourages a baby who does turn to stay head-down until birth.

Whether or not your baby is breech, hypnotherapy during pregnancy can help to relax your body, mind, muscles and baby. It can also help make you feel more confident and empowered about birthing and becoming a parent – no standing on your head required!

Alisha Tamburri is a clinical hypnotherapist, birth doula, HypnoFertility therapist, and childbirth educator. She has more than 30 years of experience working with expecting parents, alleviating anxieties and resolving personal and physical challenges through hypnotherapy. Alisha is a pioneer of HypnoBirthing Childbirth Education in California. She is also the proud mother of two daughters, two sons-in-law, and two grandsons.

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