

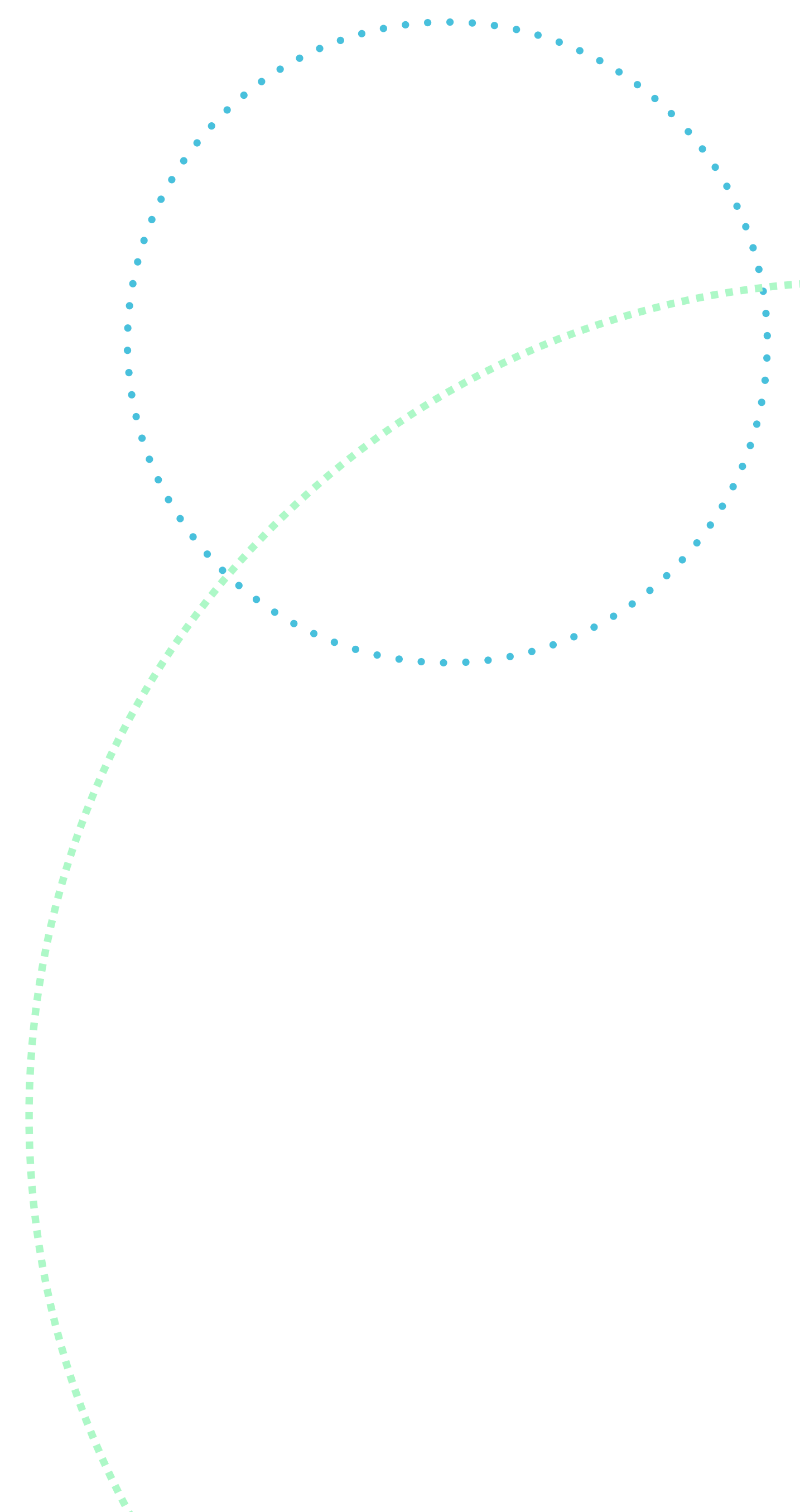
Module 6 Helpful Strategies for Labor and Birth



A woman's
body **changes**
to prepare her
for pregnancy
and birth

A Woman's Body Changes to Prepare Her for Pregnancy and Birth

- Connective tissues soften in the joints.
- The pelvis, cervix, and vaginal tissues expand to accommodate the baby.
- The baby's head molds as it moves through the mother's body.
- Knowing how to move your body and change positions during labor and birth can reduce your pain and help labor progress.



Move and Change Positions During Labor and Birth

With the help of your partner or doula you can:

- ⦿ Stand with support in different positions;
- ⦿ Sit in different positions;
- ⦿ Kneel forward with support;
- ⦿ Walk;
- ⦿ Lie on your left or right side;
- ⦿ Squat for birth.



Take pressure
off your back
and **widen**
your pelvis



Learn How Different Positions Can Make Your Labor Easier and More Comfortable

- Lying on your back and being restricted to bed during labor is more painful, affects your baby's heart rate and slows down the progress of labor.
- This mother is being supported with a rebozo, a woven shawl that can be used in several ways during labor to reduce pain and increase comfort.



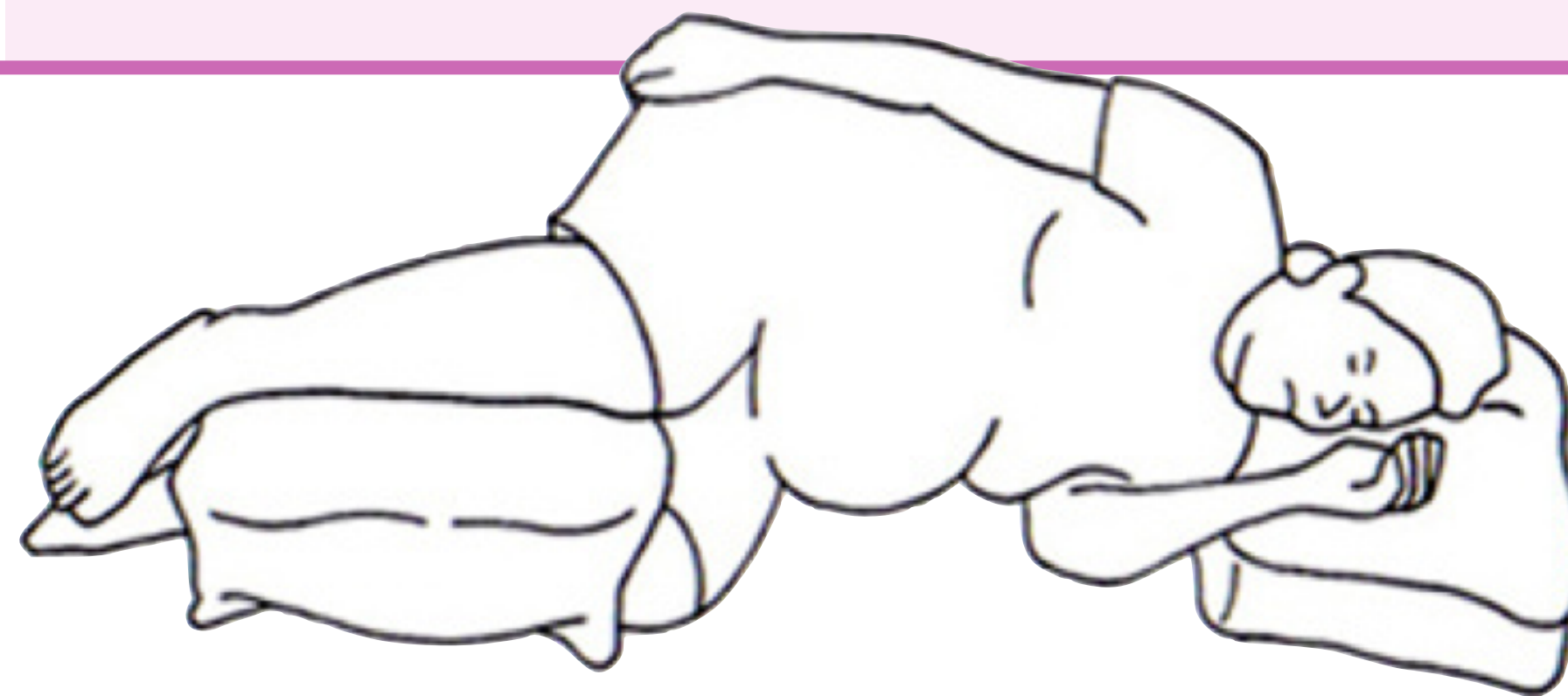
A pregnant woman with long brown hair, wearing teal scrubs, is looking down at her belly. A man in a blue polo shirt stands behind her, looking on. The scene is set in a hospital room with medical equipment and a window with blinds. A dotted white line circles the woman and the man. A pink horizontal bar is at the top of the text box, and another pink horizontal bar is at the bottom of the text box.

There are several ways you can help labor **progress** and make yourself more **comfortable**

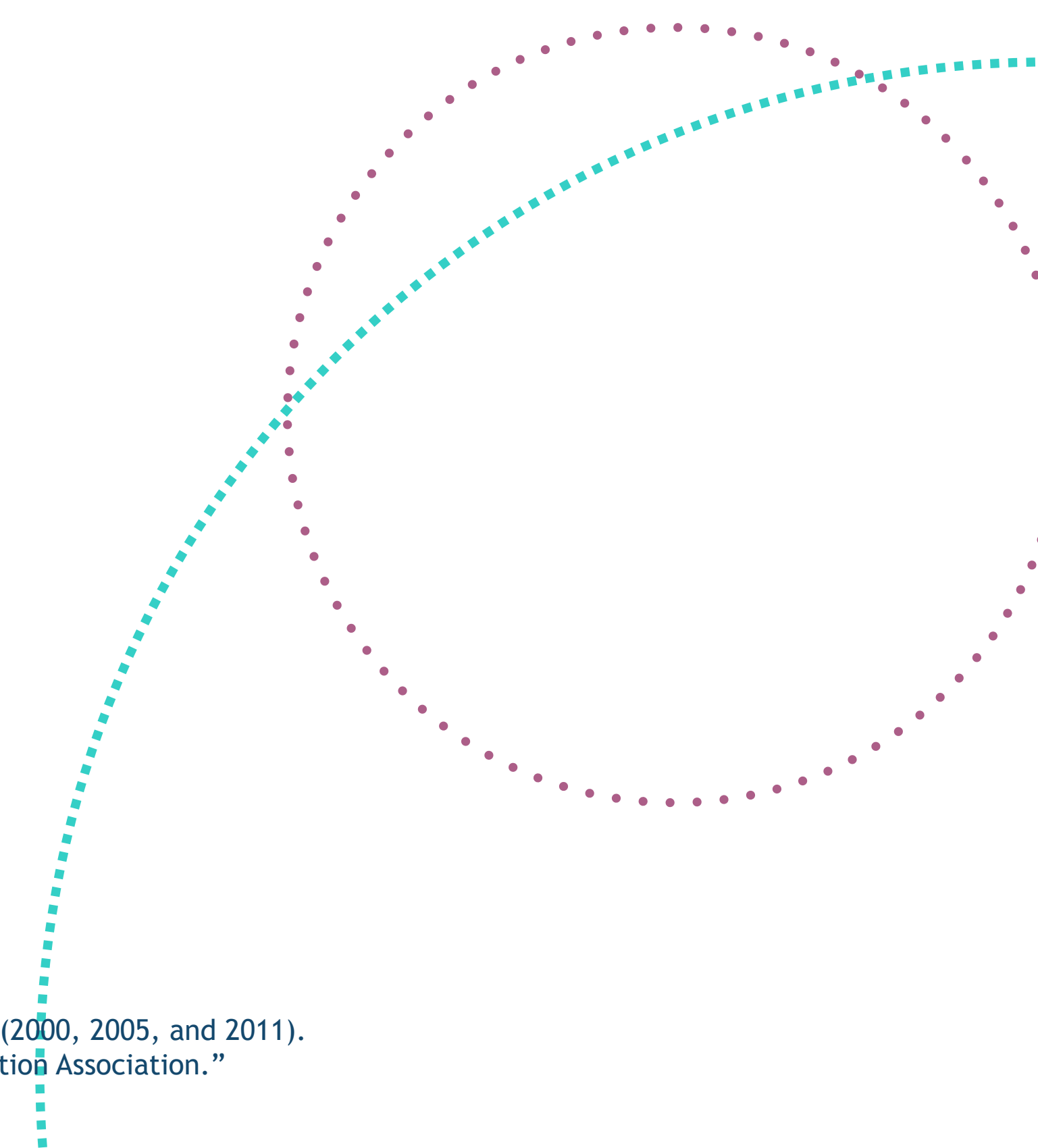
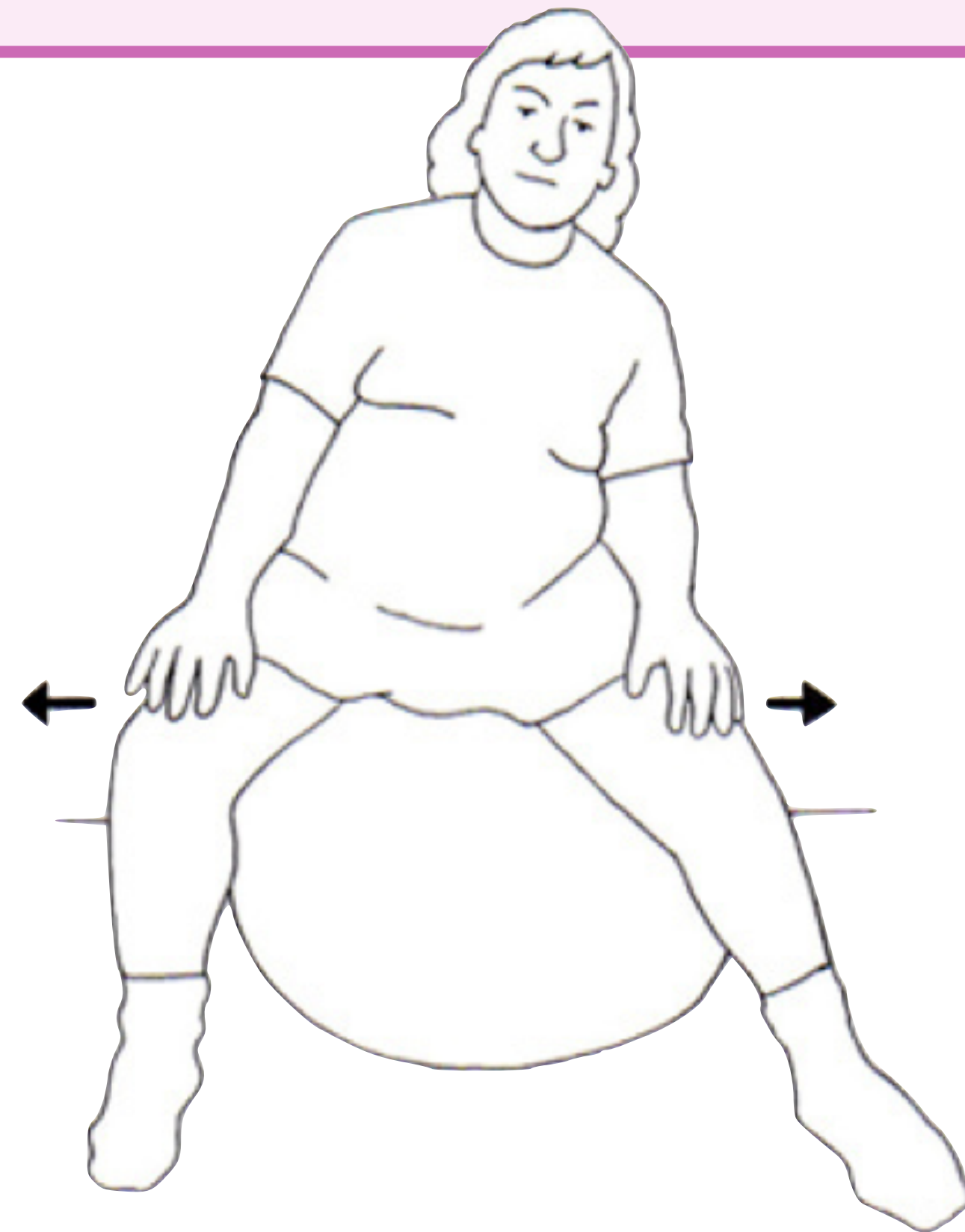
Staying upright and walking makes contractions more efficient, helps the cervix dilate, moves the baby down, and decreases back pain.



Lying on your side helps with back pain, provides added oxygen for mom and baby, makes contractions more efficient and can be used to give birth.



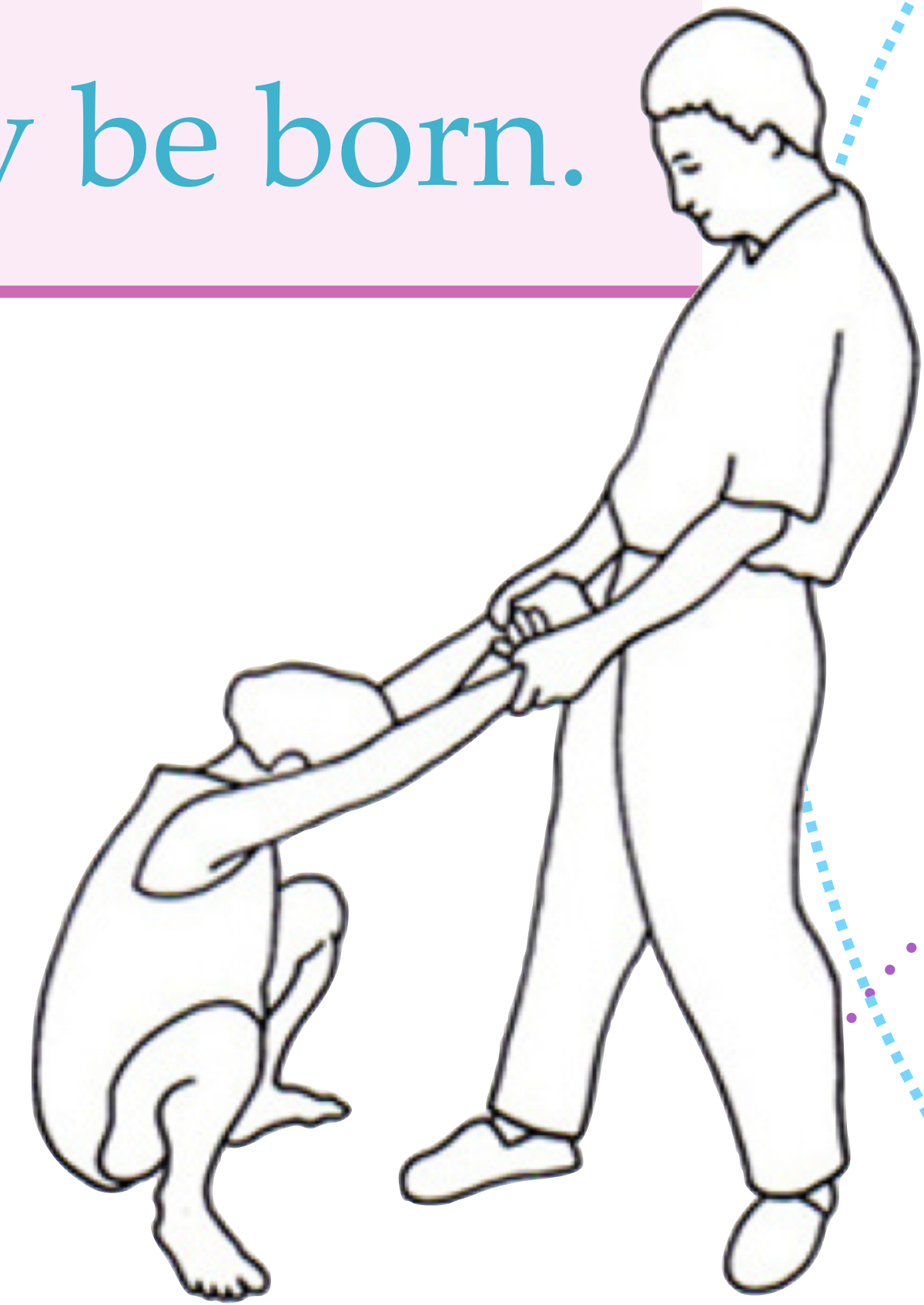
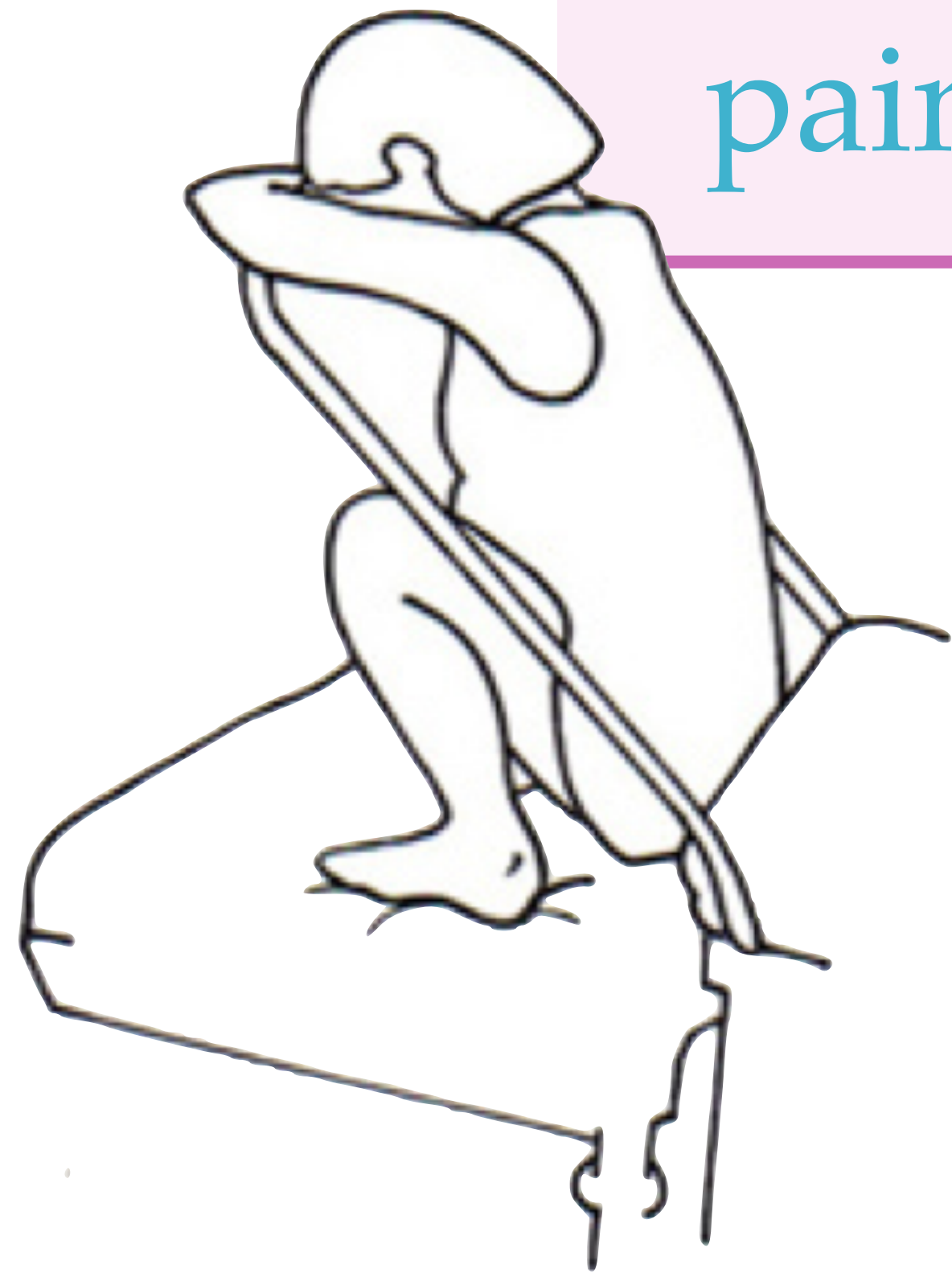
Swaying side-to-side on a birth ball relieves back pain and helps labor to progress.



Sitting helps with back pain, increases effectiveness of contractions, helps the cervix to dilate, and move the baby down.

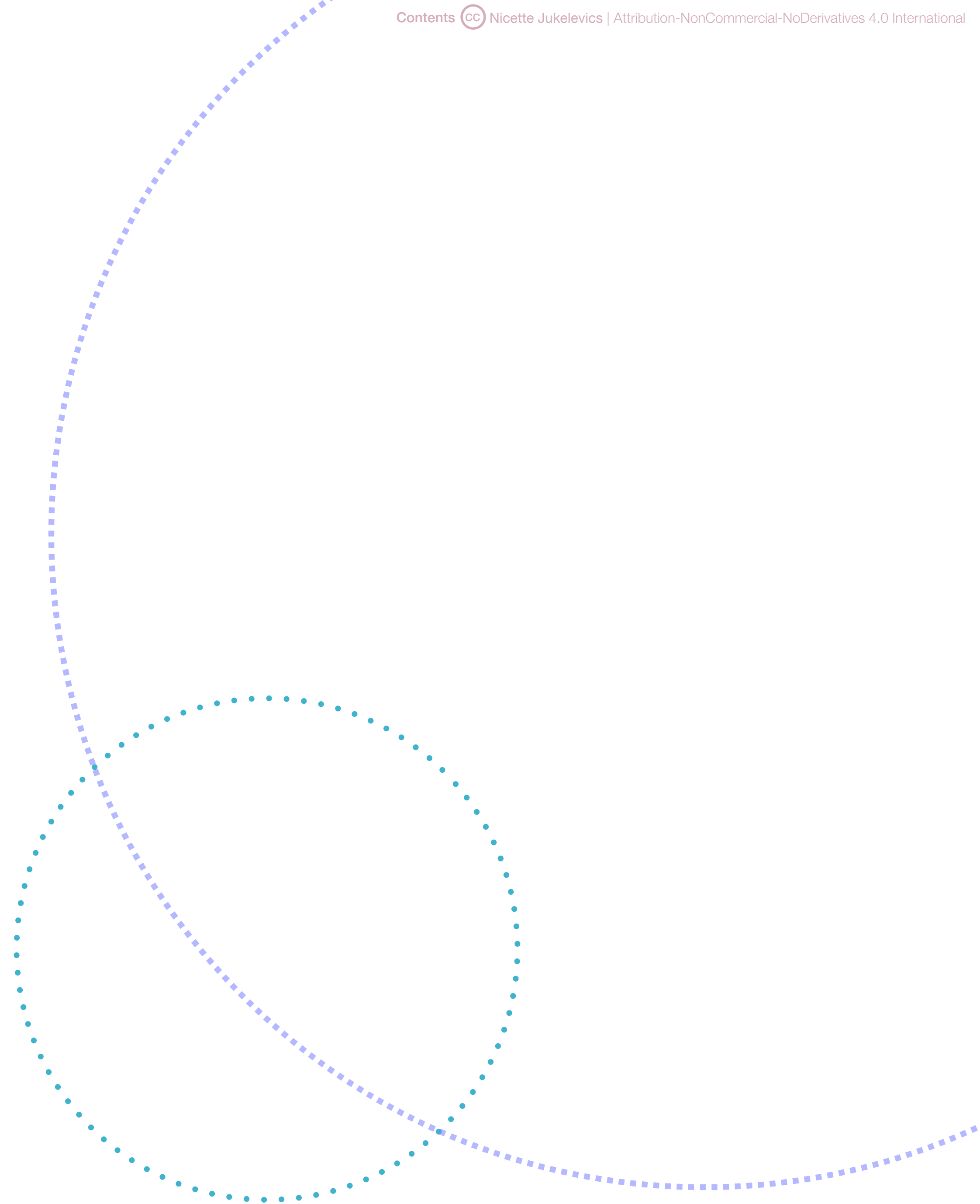


Squatting widens your pelvis by 20% to 30%, relieves back pain and helps the baby be born.



Key Points to Review

- Pregnancy prepares the mother's body for labor and birth.
- Having the ability to move around, walk and change positions helps to reduce the pain of labor and helps labor progress.
- Freedom of movement, knowing what comfort measures are useful and changing positions in labor and birth reduces the need for pain medication and an epidural.



Checklist for Parents

- A woman's body changes to prepare her for pregnancy & birth. Connective tissues soften in the joints. The pelvis, cervix, and vaginal tissues expand to accommodate the baby. The baby's head molds as it moves through the mother's body.
- Knowing how to move your body and change positions during labor and birth can reduce your pain and help labor progress.

Photo- Shutterstock



Checklist for Parents

- Stay upright and walk during labor.
- Lie on your side to help with back pain.
- Sway side-to-side on a birth ball to widen your pelvis.
- Sit on the bed, in a rocking chair or arm chair.
- Lean forward against the back of the bed.
- Squat for birth to widen your pelvis by 20% to 30%.



Resources for Parents

- ◎ **Birthsource**
Back Labor: What It Is and What You Can Do About It
Birth Balls, How To Use Them During Labor
- ◎ **Childbirth Connection**
Penny Simkin. Comfort in Labor: How You Can Help Yourself to a Normal Satisfying Childbirth
- ◎ **Lamaze International**
Pros and Cons of 11 Common Labor Positions
- ◎ **Royal College of Midwives, U.K.**
Campaign for Normal Birth, Short Videos on Labor and Birth Positions

