



Healthy Families Homebirth

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Ways to Turn a Breech

Having a breech presentation by 37 weeks happens about 3.7% of the time. It is common to wait until this time to start to be concerned about working on ways to turn the breech baby to a head first baby. Waiting until this time does pose an additional risk of having any method one tries to fail though, because the fetus is a bit larger than a few weeks earlier. By 34 weeks only about 5% of babies are still in a breech presentation and this may be a good time to start thinking about methods of moving the fetus into a permanent head down position.

If your baby is discovered breech after 34 weeks, then it might be helpful to get an ultrasound to check the uterus for anything that might be obstructing the fetal position and to check the fetus for anything unusual that might be keeping him/her from turning into a head down position.

Once both of those factors have been ruled out, to the best of the ultrasound's ability, it is a good idea to starting trying ways to encourage a head down baby.

Various methods to turn a breech baby:

*The first 6 options are non-invasive and many women have found them helpful. The external cephalic version has shown to be successful, but does pose additional risks in the procedure.

- Moxibustion and acupuncture: stimulation of the acupuncture point located on the pinky toe at the outer corner of the nail bed has been shown promising to help
- Homeopathy- please speak with me or another skilled professional about this option.
- Hypnotherapy and/or visualization: Hypnobabies offers a CD to listen to; you can visualize your baby head down in the pelvis and have others visualize this also with you.
- Pelvic floor physical therapy with a training professional: Lynn Leech is my local resource.
- Chiropractor: one specializing in the Webster technique is especially useful
- The breech tilt: lying on a flat surface, like an ironing board, place the end for the feet up about the height of a couch seat. Lying with your head tilted down, gently massage your abdomen. With one hand on the baby's buttocks and the other on the head, lift the baby up and out of the pelvis. Gently rock the baby towards a forward or backward

This is general information. Please speak to your health care provider about your unique health needs.



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somersault. Once the baby turns head down, get up and walk around. Do a few deep squats to encourage the baby to stay head down. This should be done for 15-20 minutes 6-8 times daily. Practice for at least 3 days in a row. By the fourth day the baby will likely turn in anticipation of the exercise.

- External cephalic version- this is very similar to the breech tilt, but it is done with much more force. Please see the additional risks associated with this procedure on the informed consent waiver.

If the baby stays breech, then the state of Colorado regulations require home-birth midwives to transfer care to the obstetrician of your choice. There are several in the state that will attempt a vaginal breech birth in the hospital.

Reference:

Frye, A. (2010). *Holistic Midwifery: A comprehensive textbook for midwives in homebirth practice*. Portland, OR: Labrys Press.

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