



A warm welcome!

29 haptonomic positions for during pregnancy,
childbirth and afterwards
for more contact, trust and relaxation for you,
your partner and your baby



Alsjeblieft! For you!

You are holding a useful pocket guide that will help you put everything you learned during haptonomic pregnancy guidance into practice. If you are not yet familiar with this form of guidance, this guide can introduce you to the haptonomic approach to touching and making contact.

Inside this guide you will find 29 haptonomic positions for during pregnancy, childbirth and for the period after the birth of your baby. You will find the accompanying text on the backside of each page. Try the positions for yourself and find out which ones you like best and which one empower you most.

We wish you a joyful pregnancy and a beautiful birth!



Zwangerschapshaptonomie Pregnancy Haptonomy

Haptonomic pregnancy guidance focuses on how you experience and deepen the contact between you, your partner, and your baby. As a pregnant woman, you will feel more comfortable in your own body and you can become more receptive to your body's signals. You connect to your own strength and you will learn to trust the natural process of giving birth.

As a partner you learn how to bond with your baby by touching the belly of your pregnant wife with consideration. You will also find out how you can best support your wife and your baby during pregnancy and birth.

By reflecting on the contact between you and your baby now, you will create a warm and safe foundation.



Aanraken met aandacht vergroot jullie verbinding en verzacht je lichaam

Attentive touching increases your connection and softens your body

Your baby's sense of touch develops early in the pregnancy. Your baby is therefore very sensitive to touch and also reacts to it. Sometimes, when your baby feels comforted by your touch, he will move towards your hand.

If you regularly attempt to make this contact, your baby will feel safe and welcome. By doing this, you can strengthen your bond and pave the way for a secure attachment.

As a partner you can invite your wife to relax by putting your hands on her belly in way that is enjoyable for her. She can experience more space in her belly and pelvis, and also a sense of relief in her body. If you are positioned behind her, you literally "have her back", and you can support her so that she can relax.

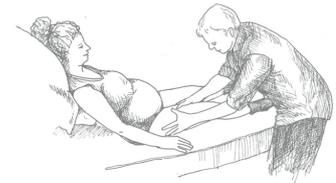


Je buik in de handen van je partner leggen en samen het kindje voelen

Resting your belly in the hands of your partner and feeling your baby together

Through the course of your pregnancy, you might experience the weight of your growing baby in your belly as heavy. By momentarily passing on the task of carrying your baby to your partner, you will feel lighter. You place the baby in your partner's hands, as it were. This way, you share the weight and your partner is more included in the pregnancy.

Your baby can settle in the accepting hands of your partner. For you as a partner this will feel like you are already holding your baby. Such an intimate moment is often a moving experience.



Je vrouw helpen om in verbinding te blijven met haar buik, bekken en benen

Helping your wife to stay connected to her belly, pelvis and legs.

As a partner you can help your wife by putting your hands on her legs and stroking her, down from her hips towards her feet. This is an invitation for her to feel towards your hands, to connect to her own body. It is a great way to help your wife relax during pregnancy and childbirth.

Anxiety, discomfort and pain during pregnancy and childbirth can cause you to distance yourself from your body. You move away from the pain, causing your body to tighten which makes the delivery more difficult. If you are more present in your own body it will be easier to cope with the pain, and the delivery will be smoother.



Je vrouw helpen meer te ontspannen in haar bekkengebied

Help your wife relax in her pelvic area

As a partner you slide your hand under her pelvis. Her tailbone must rest comfortably in your hand. Your wife rests her leg and through your touch you invite her to feel towards your hand. Let her rest in your hand for a moment and then slowly move your hand down towards her feet.

As a pregnant woman you will experience more comfort and space in your body through this exercise. Your baby will also experience that you create more space. You will feel more in your lower back, your belly and your pelvis. This will make it easier for you to focus inwards and makes you more receptive to your body's signals. During the delivery, you will be able to distinguish better what feels good or not for both you and your baby.



Je omhuld en gesteund voelen

Feel embraced and supported

As a mother you make the birth of your baby possible. You make room in your pelvis and you open yourself up, so that your baby can be born. In order for this natural process to take place as smoothly as possible, you will have to stay focused exclusively on yourself and your baby.

As a partner you can support your wife by focusing on what she needs. What are her wishes? What is needed for her to focus solely on giving birth?



In these poses you as a partner embrace your pregnant wife. First you ensure that you are in a good, comfortable and relaxed position. From that position you offer your wife and the baby in her belly a nice and safe place. Your support and engagement will be tangible and will enable your wife to stay in contact with herself and submit to the contractions.



In je eigen kracht én samen

Finding your own strength, together

At some point, the contractions will become more intense and will require more concentration. As a woman in labour, you might seclude yourself more and more from your partner and your environment.

As a partner you can be a great support in this phase of childbirth. During a contraction, you can put your hands on her lower back or hips. This touch gives your wife direction and focus, even if the contractions are intense. You help her stay connected to her body and support her in feeling towards the contractions.

As a woman you will notice that these touches soften your body and make it easier to cope with the dilation contractions. In addition, touching stimulates the production of the hormone oxytocin, which is important for childbirth.



Als je moe bent of gewoon even wilt liggen

When you are tired or just want to lie down

You can also receive your contractions lying down on your side. This can be more comfortable, especially when you are tired. Lie down with your buttocks against the hip of your sitting partner, so that you continue to make contact with your pelvic floor. This can make it easier to cope with the contractions as your body remains soft and relaxed.

As a partner in this position you can put your hand on the lower back of your wife. In this way, you are close to the baby and you direct him. You acknowledge that he is heading in the right direction, as it were. Furthermore, you give your wife support and a direction to feel towards.



Soepel van de ene houding naar de andere

Smoothly from one position to another



Receiving the contractions in a vertical position will make you feel more in control over what happens during the delivery. It is an active position and it invites you to rely on your own strength. These positions are also suitable if you are giving birth in the bath.

You can sit on your partner's lap. This contact gives you support and helps you direct your attention towards your lower body. You stay present in your pelvic floor and you can make room for the birth. Your partner can lay their hands on your thighs, hips or lower back for extra support. This enables you to focus more on this contact.

As a partner it is important that this position is comfortable for you, so that you can maintain this position for a while. You can use a standard pillow or a meditation cushion.

From this position you can easily switch to a position on hands and knees, or leaning on the birth ball.



Als de bevalling pittig wordt

When the delivery becomes tough

The delivery will demand your full presence in everything that might present itself at any moment. If you are present in your body, you will find that your breathing automatically adapts to what is needed.

As a partner you are receptive to your wife's signals, and, like her, you adapt to whatever happens. Sometimes it is nice to get closer to her, sometimes it is better to give her some space. Trust your gut feeling and if you are not sure; ask her what she prefers. It can be a firm touch that provides her with an anchor to feel towards, or it can be a gentle touch that she needs.

You can rock gently and find support on the birth ball. The lunge position on the right is ideal for opening up space for your baby's shoulders during labour. You will probably only use this position during the pushing stage.



In je kracht blijven en zelf de regie houden tijdens de persfase

Stay in power and control in the pushing stage

These positions are meant only for the pushing stage. A vertical position, for example the squat, is a natural way to push. If you feel that you want to move or take a different position during the pushing stage, you should mainly follow your impulse. Your baby and your body will tell you what is needed. You can rely on your own ability and strength.

As a partner you can support your pregnant wife. With a firm or gentle touch to the hips and legs, you can indicate the direction for your wife to push towards.



Je kindje zelf aanpakken tijdens de geboorte

Hold your baby whilst it is being born

You or your partner can be the one to hold your baby whilst he is being born. Your baby already knows your hands as you have made contact through the belly during pregnancy. Your hands feel familiar.

By placing your baby on his side close to your heart right after birth, he can look at you. The sound of your heartbeat and your skin-to-skin contact offer sanctuary and safety.

The first hour after birth is also called the 'golden hour'. The process of birth has opened all your baby's senses and he is very sensitive, present and alert. The first impressions are therefore very important. Make sure there is as much peacefulness and skin-to-skin contact as possible. This allows to recover together and to start a secure attachment.



Je kindje basisbevestigend dragen

Holding your baby basis-affirmative

When picking up your baby, you can invite him to move with you. By starting the movement at his basis, you appeal to an active attitude. Your baby feels what is going to happen, and so he can move with you more easily.

Carrying your baby with a loving hand under his basis relaxes his body and makes him feel safe. He feels seen and confirmed. He is also invited to erect himself and to actively look into the world. Holding your baby basis-affirmative is also comfortable and light for you.

During playtime you can use the basis-affirmative touch to invite your baby to lift his head so that he can discover the world. Instead of using a toy, you can also sit next to him as a partner, and make contact with your baby.



Samen bewegen is leuker Moving together is more fun

Changing your baby's diaper is a recurring opportunity to make contact and to invite him to work together. You can do this by putting your arm underneath his one leg whilst holding his other leg in your hand. By pressing gently with your arm against his legs, you invite him to raise his legs by himself, so you can change his diaper. This approach is more comfortable for your baby than lifting him by his feet. Furthermore, by indicating to your baby what you are going to do, he will know your intention.

If you carry your baby up or down the stairs, you can support him under his buttocks - in his basis - and let him lean into you. This will make your baby feel calm and safe.



De wijde wereld in Into the big wide world

By letting your baby do the things he is already capable of doing himself, and supporting him where it is still needed, you see and acknowledge him and he will go into the world with confidence.

Haptonomy helps you to be sentient and present in your body. You and your partner will recognise your body's signals and decide what is good for you and for your baby. This of course applies to pregnancy and childbirth, but just as well to the whole life that you enter together.

We wish you a loving start!



Zo natuurlijk mogelijk, in je eigen kracht en samen met je partner As naturally as possible, in your own strength and together with your partner

Haptonomic pregnancy guidance is an individual, tailored approach which helps you prepare for childbirth together. In approximately six sessions you will receive all information important for pregnancy, childbirth and the time thereafter. There will always be attention for special situations, such as loss, twins or fear of the prospect of childbirth.

Making contact with your baby, your body and your partner takes a central place during the sessions. You will learn how you can be more perceptive to your own body's signals, and your partner will acquire skills to support you. This will help the delivery to be smoother and more natural. And that way you immediately provide a good foundation for the process of attachment.

Do you feel inspired, and do you want to start haptonomic pregnancy counselling?
You will find all addresses in The Netherlands and Belgium on: www.zwangerschapshaptonomienederland.nl



A warm welcome! was published to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Association for Haptonomic Pregnancy Counsellors.

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