Roll Away Your Worries: Relaxing With a Stress Ball

How do we do it?

1. Attach a deflated balloon to the end of a funnel. Spoon in about 2½ or 3 inches of cornstarch or flour into the balloon.
2. Tie a string at the end of the balloon opening.
3. Massage the stress ball. Let the ball absorb your stress. Imagine what your baby is doing while you are releasing stress.
4. When you feel worried or irritable, squeeze your stress ball for relief. Roll it in your hands while you share your feelings with your partner or a friend.

What's in it for us?

> Managing your tension reduces the stress on your developing baby.
> Excessive stress can negatively affect your sleep, diet, and interactions with others.
> Your baby's brain is developing natural coping responses to stress in utero.

Taking care of you

Do you feel safe? When you feel safe, your body holds in less tension.
Are you able to share your dreams, thoughts, and concerns with someone? It can be your partner, a family member, or a friend. You can also talk to your baby!
Another good way to relax is to go outside. Enjoy nature and get a breath of fresh air.

Safety and health tip

Chronic stress is not good for mothers during pregnancy, and it can harm the development of the baby's brain too. It can interfere with a healthy pregnancy and birth.
If you feel unable to manage your stress at any time during your pregnancy, talk with your health care provider.
Parenting behavior

Nurturing: When you surround yourself with caring, sensitive, and supportive relationships, you buffer you and your baby from the unexpected circumstances of chronic or overwhelming situations in your life.

What I noticed about my baby ...

What I noticed about myself ...

Continued Learning

Take a tension body check. Find a comfortable position. Breathe slowly and rhythmically. Focus on one body part at a time. As you breathe in, detect any tension in that body part. Squeeze its muscles, then release.

Take another deep breath and move to another body part. You may find specific tension spots. If you relax your shoulders, for example, the rest of your body may follow.

What I noticed about those around me ...