

# Rebirthing

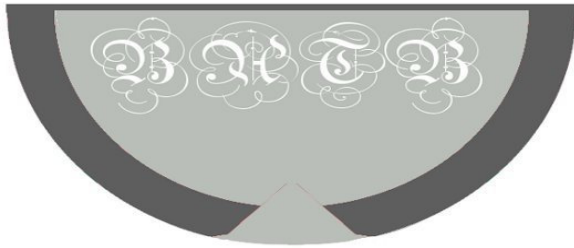
Rebirthing is a process that helps mark a restart in your breastfeeding relationship. It's about simulating the sensations of birth in a nurturing way so as to re-flip the "switch" of turning on mom's and baby's instincts. It's about restoring defaults, in a way. Rebirthing is a great idea for a new beginning after a rough birth, fresh adoption, or post frenotomy. This process can be done in many ways and should always be comfortable for everyone involved. Here is an outline of how it is most typically done, but it should be customized.



Fill the tub with body temperature water. A baby thermometer is accurate enough to check the temperature. Aim for about 99 degrees; the temperature used for water births.

Mom climbs into the tub and gets comfortable, sitting up. She needs to be bare from at least the waist up. The water should be between waist and nipple height.

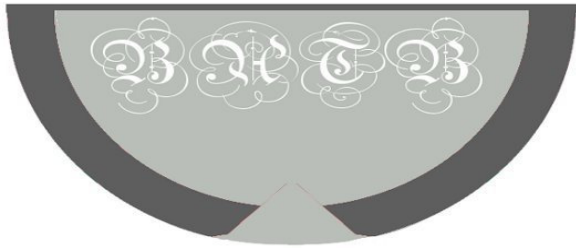
The rebirthing partner hands baby to mom. Then, she eases baby down into the water until he is floating on his back with just his head out of the water and only the back of his head supported. Most babies will be relaxed and peaceful this way. It is womb-like to them.



After baby is floating and has settled, mom brings the top of baby's head against her abdomen and places her free hand on the baby's forehead. This way she can feel that his face is out of the water.

At this point, the rebirthing partner will turn the lights out or down. It is most important that baby's face stays out of the water. Make it as dark as mom is comfortable with while maintaining that. This may mean anything from drawing the curtain to just a night light or candle to total darkness. This is simulating the womb.

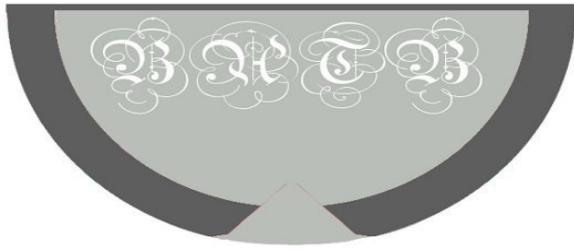
Now, mom will pour her heart out to baby. She talks about everything that has happened up to this point (starting from pregnancy, through the birth, and beyond) and what she hopes for the future. She talks about feelings, both physical and emotional. She talks about the positive and the negative and about moving forward.



When mom has poured her heart out, she welcomes her rebirthing partner back in to bring a warm towel (a heating pad, the oven on its lowest temp, or a space heater works for this) and to turn the lights on. At the same time as the light level goes up, mom brings the baby out of the tub; like he is being born from the simulated womb. Baby goes immediately to mom's bare chest and has a warm towel placed over him, as would happen with birth.



Allow baby and mom to hang out in the water skin to skin like this for as long as everyone is happy there. Most often baby will wiggle down and latch himself on, as in [laid back breastfeeding](#). When they are ready, mom hands baby to her rebirthing partner and climbs out. It helps if this is followed by a 48 hour babymoon filled with skin to skin and unlimited access to the breast.



## Tips:

~Aim for a baby who is not full, but not actively hungry. About an hour after a big feeding is usually a good goal.

~If milk has already started transitioning (“come in”), mom’s breasts are best comfortably full. There should be enough for a baby to easily remove, but not engorged where baby might get overwhelmed.

~Try to avoid bottles for 48 hours before rebirthing. If supplementing is still happening, using a bottle alternative or non-traditional-bottle for just those proceeding 48 hours helps.

~If not comfortable with all aspects of the rebirthing procedure, the elements that are most important is that baby is enabled to float peacefully for a while, then brought to Mom’s chest and allowed to hang out there for a while, hopefully even latch on.