



TENS MACHINE

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The

TENS machine

is another thing I had never heard of before I moved to London. (Maybe because I was more concerned with the pain of a hangover than I was with the pain-relief of labour)??? I'm not sure if TENS machines are common in the rest of the world, but they are quite common here in the UK!

TENS stands for Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator. TENS machines deliver small electrical pulses to the body via electrodes placed on the skin. It is used as a drug-free form of pain relief during labour. You're supposed to strap it on and begin using it when contractions begin. As contractions become stronger, you can increase the strength of the electrical pulses. I kept mine on throughout labour. It's hard to say if it *really* worked for me, but I liked the feeling of control - like I was able to do something to ease the pain!



stimulating the body to make its own pain-easing chemicals called endorphins.

It is said that the amount of pain-relief the TENS machine offers can differ from person to person. And while the research evidence to support the TENS machine is not strong, it is hugely popular here in the U.K., so it must be affective one way or the other.

You can either buy one (a good idea if you plan on having more babies), or rent one! I rented mine from [Babycare TENS](#), and was really happy with their easy-to-use service.

I'm interested if they're used in other countries, and what other people's experience has been with them.

-Courtney

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