

# “The Hormone is Right” Game Key

	OXYTOCIN	BETA-ENDORPHINS	CATECHOLAMINES	PROLACTIN
NICK-NAME	The love or cuddle hormone	Pain-relieving or pleasure hormones	Fight-or-Flight hormones	Milk-producing or mothering hormones
BEST KNOWN FOR	Produces rhythmic contractions during sex, childbirth, and breastfeeding	Body’s own opioid Creates “Runners’ High” Fights depression	Prepares the body to stand and fight or run in times of danger, stress, or fear	Stimulates the production of breastmilk
PREGNANCY EFFECTS ON MOM	Promotes prenatal bonding with the baby. Reduces anxiety and stress. Promotes the “Calm and Connection Response.”	Levels increase during pregnancy, especially in women who exercise regularly	In late pregnancy, these hormones increase the sensitivity of the uterus to oxytocin in preparation for labor	Thought to promote nesting behavior just before labor begins
PREGNANCY EFFECTS ON BABY	In the 24 hours around the time that labor begins on its own, this hormone protects the baby by decreasing activity in the baby’s brain.	These hormones suppress the mother’s immune system so that the mother’s body does not harm the “foreign” baby.	A few days before labor begins on its own, these hormones prepare the baby’s lungs for breathing after birth.	This hormone aids in fetal development. It also helps to prepare the baby to breathe after birth and stay warm after birth.
EFFECTS ON LABOR & BIRTH	Produces labor contractions. A big surge in this hormone late in labor helps the mother to push the baby out.	Reduces labor pain and creates an altered dreamlike state of consciousness, frequently called “laborland”	A surge of these hormones in 2nd stage gives the mother extra energy and helps the baby to be alert at birth.	The levels of this hormone change as labor progresses, possibly helping to “pace” the labor.
PRIMARY PURPOSE AFTER BIRTH	Promotes mothering behaviors.	Promotes mothering behaviors.	Promotes mothering behaviors.	Promotes mothering behaviors.

Adapted with permission from a game developed by Patricia Predmore. The chart has been updated by Debby Amis for The Family Way Publications based on the report, *Hormonal Physiology of Childbearing*, by Sarah Buckley.