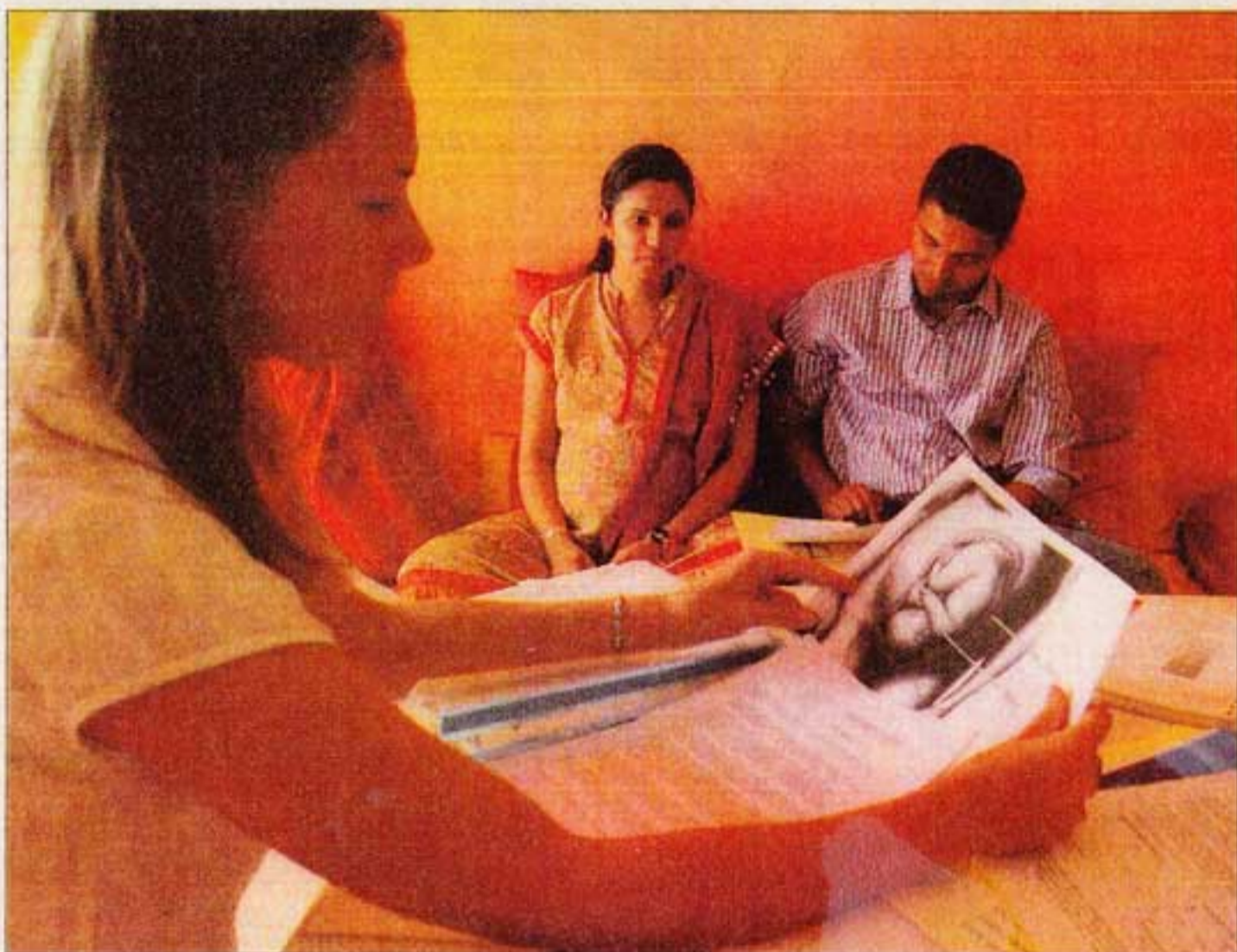


# New arrival in childbirth

Hypnobirthing courses train women to overcome pain through hypnosis



**My husband insisted we try hypnobirth. Today, I am confident that I will have a natural painless delivery and am also timing myself on how long I want to be in labour. It is supposed to be the most beautiful moment of a woman's life but I always dreaded it. Now, I am looking forward to it.**

**SHIVANI SINHA (NOT IN PICTURE),** 30-year-old software engineer and expectant mother

A hypnobirthing session in progress at a centre in Versova. From December, a group of three practitioners will introduce courses in Malabar Hill and Bandra.

PUNEET CHANDHOK/HT

**Alifiya Khan**  
Mumbai, November 9

ASK ANY mother about her experience during childbirth and expect a detailed narration of how she bore excruciating pain and gasped for air.

But this may be a thing of the past, if expecting women opt for hypnobirthing, claim experts.

Hypnobirth uses self-hypnosis and other techniques to relax the body during childbirth and is believed to significantly shorten labour and reduce pain.

"My husband insisted we try hypnobirth. Today, I am confident that I will have a natural painless delivery and am also timing myself on how long I want to be in labour," said 30-year-old software engineer Shivani Sinha, whose child is due in the last week of November. "It is supposed to be the most beautiful moment of a woman's life but I always dreaded it. Now, I am looking forward to it."

Though the concept doesn't have many takers yet, a group of three hypnobirthing practitioners who have trained would-be-mothers like Shivani is introducing the course at centres in Malabar Hill and Ban-

dra from December.

The five-week course, approved by the US-based Hypnobirthing Institute, will train pregnant women on how to overcome pain during delivery, avoid episiotomy (cut to vagina during delivery) and even change the position of the baby before delivery.

"It may sound impossible but the technique has been proven in 29 countries," said Kavita Mukhi, a hypnobirthing practitioner. "Unfortunately, fearing pain expectant mothers opt for caesareans and take epidural anaesthesia that has long-term side effect."

And it is not an alternative process of delivery. "One can avoid vaginal cuts during delivery by doing certain regular exercises during pregnancy," said Kasia Wierzbicka, also a hypnobirthing practitioner. She claims this method also increases chances of a normal delivery.

Those who have undergone the course insist it works. "During contractions I would clench my teeth and shut my eyes praying for them to pass. But now I feel I will suffer no pain and dream about my baby's arrival," said Jaipali Shetty, a com-



**LABOUR  
GAINS**

## ABOUT HYPNOBIRTHING

■ Hypnobirthing uses hypnosis to achieve maximum relaxation and relief during childbirth. It is said that during pregnancy and prior to birth, this shortens labour and reduces pain.

■ A post-review of patients who had used hypnotherapy for labour published in the *British Journal of Anaesthesia* 2004 suggested that there was evidence of the reduced need for pharmacological analgesia.

puter engineer, who is expecting her second child in two weeks.

Said Dr Duru Shah, gynaecologist at Jaslok, Saifee and Sir Harkisondas Hospital: "I have heard about the hypno birthing technique though I don't think it is used in medical practice by doctors. However, it is a technique widely used in nursing practice. In the UK, most deliveries are done by nurses and hence it is possible that this technique originating from there might be used in that country."