

HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M IN LABOR

Applies to patients 37 weeks or greater

WHAT IS NORMAL?



Early labor is the phase of labor that begins at the first set of contractions.

- These contractions develop into a consistent pattern eventually becoming more frequent and lasting longer.
- Early labor may last for several hours or even a several days and will continue until active labor.
- During this phase the cervix will begin to dilate (open up to 5cm) and efface (thin out)
- Staying home longer can provide more time for moms to relax and stay calm.
- Bloody show or release of fluid, discharge or pinkish tinged secretions

FALSE LABOR

- Contractions are irregular
- Contractions stop with movement or change in position
- Contractions fail to grow in intensity and do not get closer
- Pain may be concentrated only in front of the stomach

MOVEMENT IS IMPORTANT

- Changing positions frequently can improve labor progress and potentially shorten labor time frame
- Differing positions can allow gravity to assist in moving baby into the birthing position
- Changing positions can help with pain and relieving pressure associated with back pain or labor pain
- 3 out of 5 women fail to use movement as a tool for success in labor

Patients that stay home through early labor experience positive outcomes.

STAY HOME DURING EARLY LABOR

- Decreased potential for C-section
- Decreased use of medical interventions



- Use different breathing techniques
- Squatting, standing, swaying, side lying or walking can help baby descend or create pelvic room



SPONTANEOUS LABOR

Allow labor to begin on its own. Your body will signal when it is time for baby to come.

Call your doctor if :

- Your water breaks
- You begin bleeding bright red
- Contractions are so strong you can no longer talk or walk easily
- You are concerned baby is not moving



511: general guideline is to stay home until contractions are 5 minutes apart lasting for 1 minute for 1 hour or following your providers guidelines on when to go to the hospital.

WARNING SIGNS

Please call your provider or Labor and Delivery if you experience:

- Bleeding more than a tablespoon of bright red blood
- Fever
- Vomiting
- Foul smelling odor
- Greenish or dark fluid
- Extreme headaches
- Floaters or changes to eye sight
- Difficulty breathing
- Baby not moving

