

OB-GYN Practice

Signs of Labour

A GUIDE TO APPROACHING LABOUR:

This guide is to help you and your partner decide whether or not you are in established labour. If your labour is not established you may be asked to go home.

SIGNS THAT YOU ARE APPROACHING LABOUR

Sign	What It Is	When It Happens
Feeling as if the baby has dropped lower.	Lightening: This is commonly referred to as the "baby dropping". The baby's head has settled deep into your pelvis.	From a few weeks to a few hours before labour begins.
Discharging a thick plug of mucus or an increase in vaginal discharge (clear, pink or slight bloody).	Show: A thick mucus plug has accumulated at the cervix during pregnancy. When the cervix begins to open wider, the plug is pushed into the vagina.	Several days before labour begins or at the onset of labour.
Discharging a continuous trickle or a gush of watery fluid from your vagina.	Rupture of Membranes: The fluid-filled sac that surrounded the baby during pregnancy breaks (your "water breaks").	From several hours before labour begins at anytime during labour.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FALSE LABOUR AND LABOUR

Often felt in the abdomen. Usually felt in the back coming around to the front.

	False Labour	True Labour
Contractions	Often are irregular and do not consistently get closer together (called Braxton-Hicks contractions).	Come at regular intervals and, as time goes on, get closer and closer together.
	Contractions usually stop when you walk or may even stop with a change of position.	Contractions continue, despite movement.

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Time your contractions for an hour. During true labour ...

- The contractions last about 30-70 seconds.
- They occur at regular intervals.
- They don't go away when you move around.

Go to the hospital when ...

- Contractions are every five (5) minutes (primapara) or ten (10) minutes (multipara).
- Your membranes rupture.
- You have significant bleeding.
- or as advised by your Doctor.