



Early labour



Labour and birth are different from person to person and from pregnancy to pregnancy. No two labours or births will be exactly the same.

You may experience some of these signs when you are in early labour:

- Contractions that may be short and/or irregularly spaced. They may feel like period type cramps.
- You may have a persistent dull lower backache.
- You may have inner thigh pain that may run down your legs.
- You may have had a 'show', blood stained or pink coloured mucous, discharge from your vagina. This can appear hours and/or days before contractions start.

Early labour is good; it means your body is getting ready. Your uterus is working to help make your cervix shorter and thinner.

Babies are still active when you are in early labour and established labour. It is normal for babies to have a wake and sleep cycle during this time. Please contact your hospital or midwife if you are concerned about your baby's movements.

What should I do if I am in early labour?

- Stay calm. Carry on with your normal day to day activities but no heavy lifting. It is best to stay at home. Make sure you have access to your support person and transport.

- Eat and drink normally unless you have been advised by your doctor or midwife not to. You may want to go for a walk, have a bath or shower, use heat, aromatherapy or other things that make you feel comfortable.
- Trust your body and listen to your instincts. Rest when you need to. Early labour can take time so be patient. Some women experience symptoms of early labour for up to a week before their labour establishes. This is normal and is not cause for concern.
- If you are concerned, contact your hospital's Birth Unit or your midwife for advice.

When should I come to the Birth Unit?

- If your waters break (ruptured membranes). This fluid is usually yellow or a straw colour. Put a pad on.
- If your contractions are getting stronger, longer and closer together and have a pattern.
- If you have any bright blood stained fluid from the vagina.
- If you are in pain and do not feel comfortable to stay home.
- If you are concerned about your baby's movements.
- If you are concerned please come in and we will assess your progress.

Please let us know you are coming into the Birth Unit. This will give us time to get your file and we will be better able to manage your care.

Birth Unit contact information

Blue Mountains

(02) 4784 6572

Nepean

(02) 4734 2295

Lithgow

(02) 6350 2324



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