



CCOG

Women's Health Group  
OBSTETRICS • GYNECOLOGY • MIDWIFERY

## LABOR INSTRUCTIONS

**CALL (860) 276-6800:**

**1. When contractions are 3–5 minutes apart, lasting at least 60 seconds each for at least 1–2 hours duration.**

When labor begins, it is very important that you continue to drink fluids. A good rule of thumb is to drink a sip of liquid after every contraction. Otherwise, without realizing it, you could quickly become dehydrated. Labor, like exercise, requires extra water for contractions, sweating and breathing. Maintaining adequate hydration will facilitate a more effective and efficient labor pattern.

It is also usually wise to continue eating in small amounts if you are hungry. Fatty and acidic foods should be avoided as they can cause an upset stomach. Light sandwiches, cereals, toast, etc... will help you maintain your energy levels during early labor.

Early labor can last for quite some time, sometimes even a day or two, especially for first babies. Usually, it is best to labor at home until the contractions are so strong that you can no longer walk or talk during them. While you are at home, you may enjoy walking, showering or soaking in the tub.

**2. When your bag of water breaks, whether or not you have any contractions.**

Sometimes it is very easy to tell that your water has broken. Other times, it can be unclear. If you have any questions, please call. We can help you determine whether this has happened, usually by seeing you in the hospital and conducting a brief exam.

When you call, please let us know if:

- You have streptococcus bacteria (GBS or Group B Strep) in your vagina. We check all women at 35-36 weeks for this. It is very common and easily treated. Women with GBS need IV antibiotics when their water breaks.
- You have a history of genital herpes.
- The fluid looks green or yellow. If it does, we will probably want to see and evaluate you in the hospital.

**3. If you have significant bleeding, more than spotting, whether or not you have contractions or rupture of membranes.**

You do not need to call if you lose your mucous plug, or if you have a very small amount of light pink spotting. This is very common just before labor begins. If you have more bleeding, however, especially like a period, we would want to talk more with you.

**4. If you feel like your baby is moving less than usual.**

Babies should move at least 10 times in twelve hours. If your baby is not moving very often, try eating, drinking fluids, and lying down on your side. If you still feel like the baby is moving less often than usual, please call.

*Once you have called the office, please stay near the phone so that we can easily reach you. If at all possible, the patient herself should give the information. Your call will be returned by the nurse-midwife on call. Thank you.*