

**Signs & Symptoms of Labor**

**In early labor**, stay patient. This phase can last several hours. Try to get rest and promote relaxation by creating a quiet, calm environment. Between rest times, do things to pass time such as walking, shopping, visiting, reading, etc.

**In active labor**, time your contractions. Keep note of the time from the beginning of one contraction to the beginning of the next. Concentrate on breathing and relaxation techniques. You may eat and drink. Light meals and light fluids are important for energy later in labor.

**True Labor Contractions**

* Contractions occur at regular intervals and are increasing in frequency, intensity, and length (every 3 to 5 minutes lasting 45 – 60 seconds)
* Might feel like menstrual cramps and involve backache or pressure low in back or pelvis, or upper thighs
* Discomfort does not stop with walking, or position changes
* Sometimes your water breaks
* Cervix dilates

**Pre-Labor Contractions**

* Contractions occur at irregular intervals, and intensity is relatively unchanged
* Interval between contractions do not become shorter
* Discomfort primarily in lower abdomen
* Discomfort frequently relieved with walking, or position change
* Cervix does not dilate
* There is not a set time for labor to start after losing your mucous plug. It could be days to weeks before you go into labor after the mucous plug passes.

**Call the midwife:**

* If bag of water ruptures
* If you are having regular contractions 5 minute intervals or less (requiring total concentration) and you can’t walk or talk through them any longer
* If you have had a baby before and contractions are “feeling like labor” inform your midwife. It is possible that you will dilate quicker.
* If you feel a decrease in fetal movement
* If you are having bright red vaginal bleeding

Please call us if you believe you may be in labor

(904) 460-2771

24 Hours a day

7 Days a week