

Signs of Labor

The start of labor is often a gradual process. You may notice some or all of the following as your body prepares for labor: increased frequency of Braxton-Hicks (warm up) contractions, increased pressure in your pelvis, a burst of energy (nesting urge) or feeling very tired, menstrual-like cramps, lower backache, and/or loose bowels. *If you begin to notice these signs, please take extra care to stay well rested, napping during the days and going to bed early in the evenings, if possible. Make sure you are getting enough to eat and drink and that your refrigerator is well stocked with food to eat during labor and after the birth.*

Early Labor

The following are signs that labor is probably starting, but may go on for awhile, or stop and then start again over the course of several days so it is crucial to sleep, rest, hydrate, and eat during this time.

- Loss of your mucous plug and/or bloody show: dark old blood mixed with mucus or pink-tinged discharge
- Leakage of amniotic fluid (Check to see that the fluid is clear and the baby is moving. Try to save some fluid and note the time.) **COATSS: Color, Odor, Amount, Time, Stimulation (baby moving) and Save a sample**
- Irregular or regular contractions which can be intense and painful.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call at any time. If you are experiencing early labor signs during the day please call to give us an update. If you believe labor is starting during the night, please try to get as much sleep or rest as you can and call us in the morning. This will help you and your midwives be well rested for the birth. Please remember that it is not important to time contractions during the night; if you are able to sleep through or between them, you need not worry about their frequency or duration.

Active Labor

- For first time moms active labor contractions are usually every 3-4 minutes, lasting at least 45 seconds. We want to hear from you when your contractions are **4-1-1: every 4 minutes (from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next), lasting for about 1 minute, regularly for about 1 hour.**
- For second time moms (or beyond) we want to hear from you when your contractions are **7-1-1: approximately every 7 minutes (from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next), lasting for about 1 minute, regularly for about 1 hour.** When they are long and strong and regular, call us. If your water breaks and you're having contractions call us right away.

You should call us immediately if you experience any of the following:

- You have vaginal bleeding that is more than 1-2 tablespoons in quantity and not mixed with mucous.
- Your baby stops moving or has a dramatic decrease in movements.
- You feel worried and have an urgent question or want us to come.

Please always call the home number first and leave a message and then page me. If I do not call back in 5-10 minutes page me again. Please page me from a land line whenever possible, as pages from cell phones often do not come through completely.

Julia

Cell: 510-225-5752

Pager: 510-466-8001

Cindy

Home: 510-704-8366

Pager: 510-446-0302