

Cervical Foley Information Guide

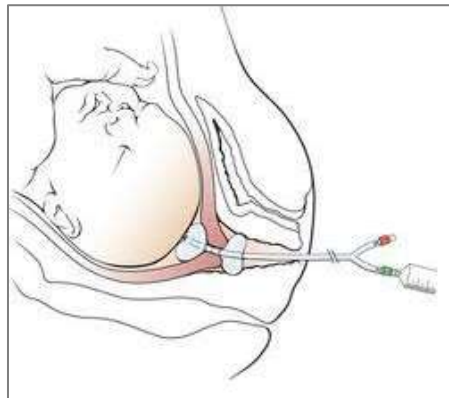
During labor, the cervix becomes thin (like a piece of paper) and opens to 10 centimeters. **Cervical ripening** is when the cervix gets ready for labor. The cervix becomes thinner, softer, and starts to open. This part of labor and induction is the longest and can take days. If necessary, cervical ripening can be done with medications or with a balloon inside the uterus called a cervical foley. The **cervical foley** works just as well as medicines.

What is a cervical foley?

A cervical foley is a rubber tube with a balloon at the end.



The balloon is placed at the opening of the uterus through the cervix. Then, the balloon is filled with water. The balloon puts pressure on the cervix and makes the body produce chemicals (prostaglandins) that it normally makes during labor. The other end of the tube comes out of the vagina and is taped to the woman's leg. The cervical foley is left in place until it falls out or it is removed after 12 hours. The cervix may open to 3-4cm if the foley falls out.



If you would like to get your cervix ready for labor at home with a cervical foley, let your prenatal provider know. You do not need to be hospitalized to have a cervical foley placed. Before placing the foley, your provider will make sure that it is safe for you to have a foley at home.

Then, they will check to see how dilated (open) your cervix is. That will determine if the cervical foley can be put in. Your provider will schedule a day to induce your labor at the hospital. If you can have a cervical foley at home, you will have an appointment for placement of the foley at 8AM and then come back to the hospital at 8PM, or sooner, if the balloon falls out.

What are the benefits of going home with the cervical foley?

Women who go home with the foley spend less time in the hospital before their baby is born.

Is a cervical foley safe?

Yes. In studies comparing women who stayed in the hospital with their cervical foley with women who went home with it, there was no difference in the number of women who experienced complications.

What should I do on the day of my appointment to have the foley placed?

1. Call labor and delivery 617.414.4364 at 6AM to confirm your appointment.
2. Pack your hospital bag and have a good meal. You may stay at the hospital if your baby shows any signs of stress, if the fluid around your baby is too low, or if the foley cannot be placed.
3. Arrive at BMC at 7:30AM and go to the Women and Infants Center on the 4th floor of the Yawkey Building, 850 Harrison Ave.

What can I expect to feel while I have the cervical foley in place?

On the day of your appointment, the team will check your baby's heartbeat and check that you are not having too many contractions before and after placing the foley. You may feel some discomfort and cramping while the foley is being placed and for a few minutes after. You may also notice some mucus with blood from the vagina that may have a pink, brown, or red color (bloody show). Some women have contractions or feel pressure in the vagina while the cervical foley is in place. All of this is normal.

When should I come back to the hospital?

Come back to the hospital at 8PM for your labor induction or if you notice any of the following:

- The foley falls out
- You think your water broke (watery fluid leaking from the vagina)
- Regular, painful contractions or contractions every 5 minutes for 2 hours
- Bleeding from the vagina like a period
- Your baby moves less than normal
- You have a fever (temperature higher than 100.4)