

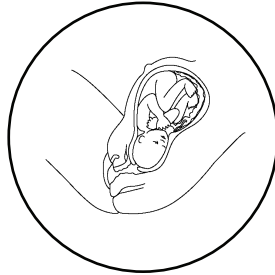
# WHAT HAPPENS TO MY BODY IN LABOR AND BIRTH?



## **Early Labor** (5 to 24 hours)

Rest, drink, eat lightly. Breathe slowly through contractions and relax.

**Cervix opens 0 to 4 centimeters.**



## **Active Labor** (3 to 6 hours)

Change your position. This may be taking a shower, sitting in a chair or rocking on your hands and knees.

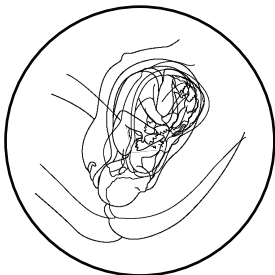
**Cervix opens 4 to 8 centimeters.**



## **Transition** (10 to 60 minutes)

This is a very intense part of labor but does not last very long. You may need extra support during this part of labor.

**Cervix opens 8 to 10 centimeters.**



## **Pushing and Birth** (5 minutes to 3 hours)

Push in a comfortable position. Blow or pant when your baby's head is crowning. This helps to prevent tears to your vagina.

**Your baby moves out of your uterus, through your vagina and out of your body.**



## **Birth of the Placenta** (5 to 30 minutes)

Contractions feel very mild. Your vagina may be sore. You may feel shaky and cold.

**Your placenta moves out of your uterus, through your vagina and out of your body.**

# INDUCTION OF LABOR

## What does it mean to have my labor induced?

Having your labor induced means starting your labor at the hospital with different medicines or treatments.

## How long will it take if my labor needs to be induced?

Starting your labor takes time! Most babies are not born the same day you go to the hospital. It can take 1-3 days for the baby to be born.

## How will my labor be induced?

There are medicines and treatments that help get the cervix (the opening of the uterus) ready for labor, and other medicines that will start contractions.

You will have an exam when you arrive at the hospital to see if your cervix is open (dilated). You and the team will decide what the best way to start your labor is after your exam.

## What can I expect when my labor is induced?

- You may have to wait to eat.
- You can drink water, juice, broth, or popsicles.
- Sometimes you can walk, shower, change positions, sleep, and go to the bathroom by yourself.
- You may have a monitor and belts on your belly to listen to the baby's heartbeat the whole time or some of the time.

## What will be used to start my labor?

**Membrane sweeping** can help the cervix get ready for labor. This is an exam done with a finger inside the cervix if it is open (dilated) to help separate the membranes (bag of water) from the cervix.

**Misoprostol** is a pill that helps the cervix get ready for labor. The pill can be swallowed or put inside the vagina. Sometimes misoprostol can cause contractions.

**A cervical balloon** is a tube with a balloon that is placed inside the cervix to help slowly open the cervix (dilate). It is put in for up to 12 hours to help get the cervix ready for labor.

**Oxytocin (pitocin)** is a medicine that can be given in an IV that starts your labor and starts contractions

**Amniotomy** means breaking the water, is sometimes done to help your labor start or progress. We use something that looks like a crochet hook to break the water.

