



Your first hours of labour

**WHAT TO DO AT HOME BEFORE GOING TO
THE BIRTHING UNIT**

How to stay calm, comfortable, and confident

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UNDERSTANDING EARLY LABOUR

EARLY LABOUR IS THE BEGINNING PHASE OF
LABOUR.

CONTRACTIONS MAY:

- BE IRREGULAR AT FIRST
- VARY IN STRENGTH
- COME AND GO

THIS STAGE CAN LAST SEVERAL HOURS —
ESPECIALLY FOR FIRST-TIME MOMS.

YOUR GOAL IN EARLY LABOUR IS NOT TO
“DO” LABOUR,
BUT TO SUPPORT YOUR BODY WHILE IT
WORKS.

CREATE A CALM SPACE

YOUR BODY LABOURS BEST WHEN YOU FEEL
SAFE.

HELPFUL IDEAS:

- DIM THE LIGHTS.
- PLAY SOFT MUSIC OR SILENCE.
- STAY IN A SPACE WHERE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE.
- LIMIT UNNECESSARY CONVERSATION.

CALM SURROUNDINGS HELP LABOUR
PROGRESS NATURALLY.

HOW TO MOVE & POSITION YOUR BODY

MOVEMENT HELPS YOUR BABY MOVE DOWN.

TRY:

- WALKING SLOWLY
- SWAYING OR ROCKING
- LEANING FORWARD
- SITTING ON A CHAIR FACING THE BACK

FOLLOW WHAT FEELS RIGHT.

THERE IS NO CORRECT POSITION.

BREATHING & COPING

YOU DO NOT NEED SPECIAL BREATHING
TECHNIQUES.

SIMPLE IS BEST:

- BREATHE SLOWLY THROUGH YOUR NOSE
- EXHALE GENTLY THROUGH YOUR MOUTH
- FOCUS ON RELEASING TENSION IN YOUR
JAW AND SHOULDERS

IF YOUR JAW IS RELAXED, YOUR BODY OFTEN
IS TOO.



EATING, DRINKING & REST

EARLY LABOUR USES ENERGY.

DRINK WATER REGULARLY

EAT LIGHT, EASY FOODS IF YOU FEEL HUNGRY

REST OR NAP BETWEEN CONTRACTIONS IF
POSSIBLE

SAVING ENERGY NOW HELPS LATER.

WHEN TO CHECK IN OR GO TO HOSPITAL

CHECK IN WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

OR GO TO HOSPITAL IF:

CONTRACTIONS ARE STRONG

AND REGULAR

YOU CAN NO LONGER TALK THROUGH

CONTRACTIONS

YOU FEEL PRESSURE BUILDING

YOU FEEL UNSURE OR NEED REASSURANCE

YOU ARE NEVER WASTING ANYONE'S TIME.



A MIDWIFE'S REASSURANCE

YOU ARE NOT BEHIND.
YOU ARE NOT FAILING.

EARLY LABOUR IS NOT
SOMETHING TO RUSH THROUGH.

IT IS SOMETHING TO MOVE WITH.

YOUR BODY KNOWS WHAT TO DO.

YOUR BABY WILL GUIDE THE TIMING.



MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

THIS GUIDE IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES
ONLY.

IT DOES NOT REPLACE MEDICAL ADVICE OR
CARE.

ALWAYS FOLLOW THE GUIDANCE OF YOUR
HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.