

WHEN TO CALL YOUR MIDWIFE - LABOUR

When you have been waiting for this day for so long, you will naturally be very excited when you think labour has started. The midwives of Transitions are excited for you, and happy to help you throughout your labour.

Early labour is a normal, natural and necessary part of many labours. Contractions may be painful but irregular, ranging from 3-15 minutes apart, varying with activity, and about 30-45 seconds long. If you can speak through your contractions, and they are not getting longer and stronger, you are probably not yet in active labour. This is a time to gather your support people, let your doula know, and try to rest, relax and practice your comfort measures. The best place for early labour is at home.

Please call us in early labour if:

- You are not coping well with the discomfort of contractions and want to discuss pain management
- You have lost one night's sleep and are concerned about rest
- Your water has broken and you are GBS positive
- Your water has broken and it is green, brown or bloody
- Your water has broken and you are not having contractions
- You have vaginal bleeding that is more than mucousy show (bleeding like a period)
- Your baby is moving less than 6 movements in a 2 hour period
- You are less than 37 weeks gestation
- You have constant abdominal pain more serious than crampy, menstrual-type pain
- You have a fever of 38 degrees (if you feel hot, shivery or flu-ish take your temperature)

Active labour is when contractions become longer, stronger and more frequent. A majority of women will not be able to speak through contractions and the time between will be short and spent recovering, so you will be less social and communicative. This is when most women will want to go to the hospital, if a hospital birth is planned, or when midwives will come to your home and set up for a home birth. Call your support people if they are not with you already.

If this is your first baby: Call when you have contractions 3 minutes apart, lasting 1 minute, for at least an hour (3-1-1)

If this is your second (or more!) baby please call: when you have contractions that are 4-5 minutes apart for an hour, that feel strong.

“Head's up” calls - Midwives who are on call already do not need a “heads up” in order to be ready to respond to you any hour of the day or night. It is to your advantage to have a midwife who is fresh and well rested so it is not necessary to wake her up to tell her you may need her later.

As always, call us whenever you need us!