

PRETERM LABOR

What is Preterm labor?

Preterm labor is a delivery before 37 weeks of gestation. Preterm babies are at risk for problems with breathing, eating or keeping their normal body temperature. The birth of a premature baby can affect your child health for many years.

What are some of the symptoms of preterm labor?

1. Uterine contractions: Uterine contractions occur normally as pregnancy progresses. These normal contractions (Braxton-Hicks) happen a few times a day, and/or when you change positions. Uterine contractions that may cause preterm labor occur in a regular pattern and are more frequent. They may be painful. Any time you have more than 6 contractions in an hour, you need to call the office.
2. Low, dull backache: It may come and go or be constant and is felt below the waist.
3. Menstrual like cramps.
4. Pressure in the lower abdomen, back or thighs. The pressure may feel like heaviness in the pelvis or like the baby is pushing down.
5. Intestinal cramping with or without diarrhea. You may or may not have gas pains.
6. Increase or change in vaginal discharge.
7. A general feeling that something is not right or you are feeling bad.

What should I do if the above symptoms continue?

1. Bedrest on your left side. Place a pillow under your lower back for support.
2. Drink 6-8 large glasses of water or fruit juice. No caffeine or carbonated drinks.
3. If symptoms continue call your doctor.