

Labour Cheat Sheet

Signs labour is starting

"Soft" Signs:

- Baby "drops"
- Loss of mucus plug
- Nesting
- Restlessness/Irritability
- Nausea/Diarrhea
- Cervix softens and opens
- Cramping and lower back ache

"Hard" Signs:

- Your water breaks
- Strong, regular contractions (feels like waves or rhythmic ache/back pain)
- Bloody "show"

When to go to the hospital

Remember 411; Contractions are 4 minutes apart, lasting 1 minute, and they've been like this for 1 hour. (This is just a general guideline).

What to do when...

Your water has broken

T.A.C.O; Time, Amount, Colour, Odor. Make notes, then go for taco's!

Labour has slowed or stalled

3 S's; sex, semen, stimulation (nipple). Does this make you uncomfortable? Labour is uncomfortable. What got you into this situation can get you out.

When in doubt, use your BRAIN

B - What are the benefits?

R - What are the risks?

A - What are the alternatives

I - What is my intuition telling me?

N - What if we do nothing for now?

Top 6 Labour Essentials

Good Support Person(s)



Whether that's your partner, Doula, mom, sister or a combination of these, make sure they understand your wants and needs and know how to help you or what to say to you. It also helps if that person isn't squeamish around blood or vagina's stretched to the size of a melon.

Snacks



Because food makes the world go round...and also because you'll be hungry once you have extra space in your belly.

Water Bottle With a Straw



This is very important. Practice having someone give you a sip from a water bottle, while you're laying down...then you'll understand why the straw is key.

Granny Panties



Imagine the Hoover Dam broke and you needed to contain all that water somehow... kidding, postpartum bleeding isn't that bad, but just note that a g-string will not contain the flow or hold pads in place.

Comfy, Accessible Clothing



Hospital gowns were designed by a man (probably) and are not conducive to labour (really, they should all be torched). Find a comfortable gown, or even just a sports bra that's easy to get off, and some baggy pants. Or, if you're ok giving birth in the same outfit you were born in (your birthday suit), that's ok too!

Oxytocin!



Bring your oxytocin A-game! Oxytocin, also known as the "love drug" is created naturally by your body and helps labour progress smoothly by stimulating contractions! You can stimulate oxytocin production by kissing, laughing, stimulating your nipples, having sex or even better, an orgasm!