

What to expect during a labor induction

Thank you for choosing The Birthplace. We are excited and honored to care for you and your family. A labor induction is the use of medications or other methods to begin the labor process. An induction may be recommended if there is a concern for the health of the mother or unborn baby, if the pregnancy has continued at least 41 weeks (one week past the due date), or if you and your provider agree to an elective induction at or after 39 weeks gestation.

Before Labor Induction

- Patient safety is our priority and your induction may need to be rescheduled if the unit is currently caring for a high volume of patients. We understand the importance of this date for you and your family and appreciate your understanding.
- Eat prior to arriving for your scheduled induction. You typically can continue a clear liquid diet after admission.

At the Hospital

- If your cervix is not dilated, our providers will perform cervical ripening. This can be done by inserting medication (prostaglandin) into the vagina or using a thin tube with an inflatable balloon on the end that is inserted into the cervix.
- Once the cervix is a few centimeters dilated, Pitocin may be started through your IV. Pitocin is a hormone that causes contractions of the uterus.
- During the induction process your care team may recommend rupturing the amniotic sac (also known as breaking your water). To do this, the provider will make a small hole in the sac with a special tool.
- IV pain medication and epidurals are available when you feel they are needed.
- Labor tubs and birthing balls are available for patients without an epidural.
- Prepare to be patient as an induction of labor can take two to three days, especially if it is your first baby and your cervix is not dilated.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if the induction does not work?

If your labor does not progress and the care team feels it is safe for you and your unborn baby to continue the pregnancy, you may be sent home with a plan to try again in a few days.

What are the risks of a labor induction?

If you have a long induction process, it may increase the risk of infection for you and your unborn baby. If your unborn baby does not tolerate uterine contractions, or your labor does not progress appropriately, a cesarean delivery surgery may be recommended.

How many visitors may I have while in labor?

There are currently no visitor restrictions during labor. At the time of your delivery, your care team may advise you to limit visitors to two to three people to provide safe care for you and your baby. Please be aware that visitor guidelines may change at any time without notice.

Who will be on my care team?

- A dedicated labor nurse to care for you.
- An attending physician who is responsible for making decisions regarding your care plan and supervises the entire medical team. The attending physician is a doctor who has completed medical school and residency training and is Board certified or eligible in their particular specialty.

Our staff changes shifts every 8 to 12 hours. We are proud to be an academic institution that provides patients and the community with the most specialized and advanced services for their healthcare needs.

