



## POST DATES PREGNANCY

Pregnancy normally lasts from 38 to 42 weeks. Every baby needs her/his own time to develop. If your due date goes by without the birth of your baby it is very normal! It means that your baby needs more time before being born.

Over the past few months you have been asked to keep a chart of your baby's movements. This becomes even more important once you pass your due date. Remember, if your baby does not move at least 8 times within a 2 hour period at least once a day (24 hours) call the midwife at OB Triage. If you notice a dramatic decrease in your baby's movements please call the midwife.

If you go a full week past your due date (41 weeks) your midwife will arrange a special check up for you and your baby. It is important that you have a good meal and lots of fluids before you come for this check up so your baby is awake. You will have a non-stress test. A non-stress test uses a fetal monitor to see what the baby's heartbeat does when he/she moves. You will also have the amount of fluid inside the bag of waters checked with an ultrasound to be sure there is a normal amount of fluid at the end of your pregnancy. If the non-stress test and ultrasound are normal, the midwife will check your cervix and talk with you about an induction of labor.

Most women will go into labor by the time they reach 42 weeks of pregnancy. To give you every opportunity to go into labor on your own, most inductions are scheduled close to 2 weeks past your due date.

Induction of labor is when the midwife uses medicine to get labor started. She will check your cervix to decide what type of medicine is used. If your cervix is soft, thin and open to 2 centimeters or more, pitocin will be used to start labor. Pitocin is given through an IV to start contractions. If your cervix is firm, long and closed, the midwife will use a pill called misoprostol that is placed in the vagina to start labor. Once your cervix is starting to open and thin or you have regular contractions, pitocin may be used to help your labor continue.

Some inductions move along quickly and a baby is born in 12 hours or less. Some inductions, especially with a first baby, can take a long time and last up to 2 or 3 days. It is important that you and your family understand this and are open to the time that you need to deliver your baby.

The day your induction is scheduled, get to Labor and Delivery between 7:30 am and 8:30 am. Be sure to eat breakfast before you come! If Labor and Delivery is very busy your induction may be

rescheduled. If this happens, a nurse will call you in the morning.

There are a few things you can do to help get your body ready for labor. You may try these things if you are not in labor by your due date. Sometimes these things can actually start labor if your body is ready.

- Nipple stimulation - roll one nipple between your thumb and forefinger until you feel a contraction. When the contraction is over, wait for about 3 minutes to start rolling your nipple again. This is worth trying for 2-3 hours.
- Sexual intercourse - semen has a lot of the hormone prostaglandin. This hormone can help soften the cervix. When a woman has an orgasm - contractions may start.
- Sweeping of membranes - your midwife can do this when she checks your cervix. Ask her about it.
- Castor Oil - It is important that you use castor oil and not any other kind of oil. Mix 2 ounces of castor oil with a large glass of orange juice and drink it quickly. You may put a pinch of baking soda in to make the mixture fizz. Some feel this

makes it easier to drink. Within a few hours you will start to feel sick to your stomach and will need to the bathroom. You will have diarrhea and stomach cramps. It can be very uncomfortable. The cramping and diarrhea may start labor if your body is ready. Best to do this early in the morning.

- Red Raspberry Leaf Tea – Drink as much as you want. This tones the uterus.
- Evening Primrose Oil Caps- take 500 mg by mouth three times a day **OR** 1,500 mg in the vagina at bedtime.