

Important phone numbers

Name of delivery hospital

Emergency room phone number

Name of health care provider

Health care provider phone number



Preterm Labor



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Call your health care provider if you have questions about preterm labor.



What you need to know

Preterm labor

Preterm labor means that you are having signs of labor before you are 9 months pregnant.

If you go into labor before your 9th month, your baby might be born too soon.

Babies born too soon are called preterm babies.

Warning signs of preterm labor

- Four or more contractions in one hour
- Cramps, like when you have your period
- Lower backache
- Pressure that feels like your baby is balling up or pushing down
- Abdominal pain (pain in your belly)
- Discharge from your vagina that looks like mucus, or looks watery or has a little blood in it



Do not ignore signs of preterm labor.



What you can do about preterm labor

Call the emergency room right away if you have one or more warning signs of preterm labor, or if...

- Your baby has not moved most of the day.
- Your baby is moving less than it usually does.
- You have blood coming from your vagina.
- You have a lot of discharge coming from your vagina.

When you call the emergency room...

- Give your name.
- Tell the doctor when your baby is due.
- Tell the doctor which warning signs you are having.

You do not want to have a preterm baby

Here is why:

- Preterm babies may have to stay in the hospital because they are too small and too weak.
- Preterm babies can have problems breathing, eating, and keeping warm, even after they come home from the hospital.
- Some preterm babies die before leaving the hospital, even with very special hospital care.



Be sure to tell your health care provider if you have ever had a preterm baby.



Medical care can often stop preterm labor.