

As you approach your due date, here are some helpful reminders to guide you as things occur. Please review this sheet carefully. If you feel your situation warrants you going to the hospital, **please call our clinic number (608-729-6300) instead of Meriter Triage (they will tell you to call them first – please don't)**. Please call us for any of the following:

Contractions

If this is your first baby, wait until your contractions are consistently every five (5) minutes or less for at least an hour, and strong enough that you must breathe through them, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. If this is not your first baby, discuss when to call with your doctor. Intensity of the contractions is more important than the frequency.

If the contractions are strong and it is difficult to talk through them, it is important to call. If contractions are mild and it is easy to talk through them, then you may wait until the contractions become more intense prior to calling. Membranes may not rupture prior to the onset of labor and you should not wait for membranes to rupture if you are having strong, regular contractions.

Rupture of Membranes

Call if you have a gush or steady trickle of fluid whether the contractions are occurring or not and no matter what time of day. At that time, we will ask questions about the color of the fluid and the baby's activity and determine how soon you should be evaluated in the hospital or office.

Bleeding

Some bloody show is normal and may appear up to one to two days prior to the onset of labor. It is also possible to have bloody show following a vaginal exam in the office. It is not necessary to call for bloody show unless the bleeding is heavy enough to require a pad.

Fetal Movement

If you notice that the baby is less active, lie down on your left side. If you do not feel at least eight (8) movements before the end of two (2) hours, you should call our office at (608) 729-6300.

Mucus Plug

Many women will experience an increase in mucus prior to the onset of labor. This is not a reliable predictor of the onset of labor and it is not necessary to call for the passage of the "mucus plug".

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- You are responsible for checking with your insurance provider regarding pre-certification, especially if you are having a scheduled C-section.
- **Meriter is a teaching hospital and we strongly believe in supporting our doctors-in-training. A resident physician (who could be male or female) will be assisting your attending physician during your hospital stay. A medical student may also be present.**

As always, call (608) 729-6300 first. In the unlikely event that you are unable to get an answer by calling the clinic number (either in person or through our answering service) , you may call Meriter Triage at (608) 417-6228.