

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AND BODY

I think I am in labor. When should I call?

Call the office if any of the following occur:

1. Your water breaks
2. Your contractions are five minutes apart or closer for at least one hour
3. You notice heavy vaginal bleeding

How can I tell if the contractions are really labor?

Labor contractions are very strong, prolonged cramps.

Labor contractions start with the top of the uterus becoming tight and hard. This tightness is usually felt from the top of the uterus around to the lower back. The tightness lasts approximately 45 seconds.

The most important thing is that labor contractions are regular like clockwork. They come and go, five minutes apart or closer.

IF YOU THINK YOU ARE IN LABOR

What if I think my water is broken or leaking?

Your water may break in one of two ways:

1. It may start as a large gush
2. It may start as a steady trickle. If this happens observe for one hour. If the trickle of water continues, no matter what position you are in, your water has probably broken.

Other things that can be mistaken for the water breaking:

1. Loss of mucus plug. In this case the vaginal discharge is mucus, not watery.
2. Leaking from the bladder. In this case, a sudden small gush of fluid occurs on standing up, but there is no leaking thereafter.

You do not have to call the doctor if either of these things occur. If uncertain about any of the above situations please call.