

How will I know when labour has started?

You are unlikely to mistake the signs of labour when the time comes but if you are in any doubt you can contact the hospital on [0151 702 4269 / 4626](tel:01517024269)

Sometimes labour starts early, before 38 weeks. If this happens contact the hospital immediately. There are several signs that labour is starting but it must be remembered all women will experience things differently.

- **Backache** You may begin to experience backache or that heavy, aching feeling you may have got during your monthly period.
- **A Show** Either before labour starts or early in labour, the plug of mucus in the cervix, which has helped to seal the womb during your pregnancy, comes away. It is usually small, pink and sticky but without a loss of blood.
- **Waters Breaking** The bag of water that had been around your baby in your womb comes away. You will notice a trickle of water coming away from your vagina or even a sudden gush that you can't control, contact the hospital immediately on [0151 702 4269 / 4626](tel:01517024269). This should be clear or very slightly blood stained. If it is dark in colour or green, again, contact the hospital immediately on [0151 702 4269 / 4626](tel:01517024269).
- **Feeling or being sick**
- **Suffering Diarrhoea**
- **Regular contractions** You may have been feeling your tummy getting tight then relaxing throughout your pregnancy. When they start to come approximately 1 every 5 minutes, last more than 30 seconds and begin to feel stronger, labour has started

If you experience any of these and have not been advised antenatally or are worried in any way please contact the hospital on [0151 702 4269 / 4626](tel:01517024269)

At the beginning of labour try to get comfortable and relaxed. A warm bath or shower may help, remaining as active as possible by moving normally and walking around is a good idea as it helps the birth to progress. It is important to have something light to eat to give you energy, as labour, particularly if this is your first, may last 12 to 15 hours. If your waters have broken you should go to the hospital straight away. If they haven't you can stay at home and wait until your contractions are coming regularly, about 5 minutes apart, lasting about 60 seconds and they feel so strong you want to be in hospital.

Please ring the hospital on **Tel: 0151 702 4269 / 4626** To let us know that you are on your way in and **don't forget your casenotes.**