

Childbirth Preparation: Labor, Birth and Postpartum healing

Preparing for Labor

PRE-LABOR LABOR CHECK LIST

- Register at St. Patrick Hospital
www.providence.org/stpatsbabies
- Complete your hospital paperwork packet.
You should have received this from your OB-GYN or Midwife. Completed form can be mailed, brought with you for a tour or childbirth class, or packed in your birth bag.
- Write out your Birth Preferences (Birth Plan).
- Pack your hospital bags.
- Have a rear-facing infant car seat installed in your car.
- Choose your pediatric provider for baby.
- Line up Childcare (older children) and/or Animal Care.
- Create Phone List/Contact Sheet.
- Register for your Childbirth Preparation, Breastfeeding, and Newborn Care Classes.
On-line at: www.providence.org/stpatsbabies
Or Call: (406) 329-5348

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PACKING YOUR BAGS FOR THE HOSPITAL

Have your birth bags packed and ready to go in the event of a rapid progressing labor. Birth bags should be packed and ready to go between 36-37 weeks.

For Mom

- Insurance cards, hospital forms, and birth preferences (birth plan)
- Toiletries (St. Patrick Hospital will provide you with shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion, a toothbrush and toothpaste, but you are welcome to bring your own. In addition, remember to pack any other toiletries you will need such as: contact lens, case & solution, glasses, deodorant, hairbrush, and cosmetics).
- Hair tie or Head band
- Lip Balm or Chapstick
- Several pairs of warm, non-skid socks (St. Patrick Hospital will provide you with non-skid socks, but you are welcome to bring your own).
- Nursing bra or tank (no underwires)
- Going home outfit (something that fit around 6 months pregnant).
- Camera and/or video camera (with battery or charger)
- Cell phone and charger
- Phone list
- Snacks/drinks you will want laboring or after birth.
- Any items you plan to use for labor (i.e. ipod, massage oils, comfort support tools, etc.)

For Partner

- Toiletries
- Change of clothes
- Snacks
- Phone & charger

For Baby

- Rear-Facing Infant Car Seat (you cannot leave hospital without one already installed)
- Prewashed going home outfit
- Prewashed blanket

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EARLY SIGNS OF LABOR

- **Leaking Amniotic Fluid**
(gush or a trickle of clear fluid)
- **Dull Backache**
(Especially if aches come and go in predictable rhythms or patterns)
- **Menstrual Type Cramps**
(Especially if cramps come and go in predictable rhythms or patterns)
- **Contractions**
(Rhythmic and predictable pattern)

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EARLY LABOR CARE

- If you have any questions, concerns, or are unsure if it is time to come in to the hospital, please Call your OB-GYN or midwife provider:
Western Montana Clinic (406) 721-5600
Providence Missoula Midwives: (406) 329-7300
- Keep track of how far apart your contractions are (contractions are timed beginning from the start of a contraction, and ending at the start of the next one).
- Call any labor support people (doula, family, etc.)
- Be sure your Hospital bags are packed and in the car: Be sure you have your insurance card and paper work.
- Stay Hydrated and eat healthy snacks or a light meal.
- Breathe and relax your body through contractions.
- Balance productive body movement with plenty of rest. Labor can take awhile, you don't want to overexert and exhaust yourself early on
- If it is the middle of the night and contractions are still far apart, try to sleep. If you cannot sleep, at least lay down and rest.
- Purposeful (daytime) activities when laboring at home include: taking slow leisurely walks, using labor positions that promote good fetal positioning, practicing your breathing and relaxation skills, and spending time with your partner or labor support team in a calm and positive environment.
- If your water has broken, call your provider immediately
- Stay calm, but engaged; this can be an active time, but it should be a conscious, intentional, purposeful and peaceful time.

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WHEN IS IT TIME TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL?

- **Per your Provider's Instructions:**
Always first follow the guidelines your OB-GYN or Midwife provider has given you regarding when to call/come in.
- **5-1-1 Rule**
- If your contractions are 5 minutes apart (or less), last for 1 minute or longer, and has been happening for 1 hour, it's time to go!
- **Call immediately if:**
 - you suspect your water has broken.
 - If your amniotic fluid is NOT clear in color, inform your provider immediately.
- **Come in immediately if:**
 - You are bleeding (More than spotting from loss of Mucous Plug)
 - Your contractions are frequent and intense.
 - If you are struggling to cope with contractions or to speak through one.
- **If in doubt, call!**
 - Western Montana Clinic (OB-GYNs): **(406) 721-5600**
 - Providence Missoula Midwives: **(406) 329-7300**
- **WHEN YOU ARE READY TO COME IN:**
- Call the Family Maternity Center to let us know you are on your way in:
(406) 329-5300
- If your Ob/Midwife has asked you to call them directly, please do so- otherwise we will notify them on your behalf
- **Parking:**
 - Broadway Building Parking Garage First Level has designated spots reserved for women in labor. Take the elevator to the 3rd floor where the Family Maternity Center is located.
 - OR, come in through the Emergency Room and we will get you up the Family Maternity Center immediately.

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ADMISSIONS and LABOR PROCEDURES

ST. PATRICK HOSPITAL FAMILY MATERNITY CENTER

- **35 WEEKS**

In order to birth at St. Patrick Hospital, you must be at least 35 weeks. If you suspect signs of preterm labor, always call your provider immediately for instruction.

- **PARKING**

The parking garage of the Broadway Building has 2 spots, close to the elevator, for women in labor. When you are in labor, you can use one of these spots, enter the elevator and come up to the 3rd floor. The Family Maternity Center is just to your right. Press the Buzzer to inform the Clinical Secretary that you are in labor and checking in.

- **CHECKING IN**

Once you are inside the doors, you will need to sign minimal consent forms for your admission, provided that you have pre-registered. (You can preregister for your Delivery at St. Patrick Family Maternity Center anytime online, or in your provider's office during a prenatal visit). You will be assigned a room to settle into. This is the room you will be in throughout your labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum stay.

- **BLOOD DRAW**

Once you are settled into your room, a nurse will take a quick blood sample to screen for your blood type and count. At this time, your nurse will insert a Saline lock into the vein, which is a small tube inserted into the arm with a catheter on one end. The Saline Lock is taped to your arm and you will still have full mobility. The purpose of the Saline Lock is to be able to provide quick access to any medications or IV fluids throughout labor, without having to insert a needle into the vein a second time.

- **EXAM**

Pelvic exams to check for cervical progression are conducted based on individual circumstances and per doctor's instructions.

- **FETAL MONITORING**

Throughout labor your provider or nurse will monitor the baby's heart rate to see how she or he is tolerating contractions. Monitoring can be done Intermittently or Continuously through electronic fetal monitoring. Certain circumstances require continuous monitoring of your contractions and of baby's vitals, for instance if there are any concerns for how you or your baby are tolerating contractions, if you have been given Pitocin, or if you have had medicated pain relief (such as an epidural). St Patrick offers wireless and waterproof monitors that allow you to move around freely and labor in the tub even if you need to be continuously monitored. If you have had an epidural however, you will be restricted to the bed.

- **VISITATION**

The Family Maternity Center has open visitation, which means your guests of choice are welcome any time. When it is time for your baby to come, we recommend you limit your support in the room to two persons, as the room would otherwise be very crowded. We have two waiting areas available for additional family members during this time.

Empowering you for the childbirth and parenting experience you envision

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EMPOWERMENT IN LABOR

- **Respecting your physical, mental, and emotional needs.**
- **Giving voice to your needs.**
- **Giving voice to your baby's needs.**
- **Advocating for your choices.**
- **Being flexible and open to the unexpected.**
- **Trusting yourself.**
- **Trusting your support team.**
- **Asking questions.**
- **Staying present to your baby's birth, no matter the circumstances.**
- **Welcoming your baby's birth, no matter the circumstances.**

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WORKING THROUGH THE UNEXPECTED

Labor does not always go exactly as we plan for it to. Sometimes we are dealt a hand that we had not anticipated.

If labor does take an unexpected turn of events, remember these basics tips...

- Continue to Breathe: Slowly, Deeply, & Consciously
- Stay Physically Relaxed and Mentally & Emotionally Calm
- Stay Present. No matter how “bad” things seem, they will worsen (on all levels) if you check out. For what reason, this is the circumstance of your baby’s birth. It is important to welcome and accept birth as it is happening, rather than remaining overly attached to how you hoped it would happen.
- Ask Questions. In most cases when an intervention is recommended, there is time to ask questions and discuss as a couple. If you and the baby are not in immediate dire emergency, it is to your benefit to explore your options and take an active role in the decision making process. In the long term, you will have felt you played an active and empowered role in your baby’s birth and will therefore feel more positive and accepting of the turn of events
 - **B** What are the **BENEFITS** of this recommended intervention?
 - **R** What are the associated **RISKS** of this recommended intervention?
 - **A** Are there any **ALTERNATIVE** options for addressing this complication?
 - **I** Can I take some time to discuss this with my partner?
 - **N** What could happen if we choose to do nothing right now?