

LET'S PREVENT PRETERM BIRTHS

THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- Drink 10-12 glasses of water every day.
- Prevent and treat constipation – call if you are having a problem
- Empty your bladder frequently
- Decrease stress in your life
- Avoid strenuous activities if they produce contractions
- Stop smoking
- Do not prepare your nipples for breastfeeding until 37 weeks gestational
- Report signs of a bladder infection
- Check daily for contractions and warning signs

WARNING SIGNS:

1. UTERINE CONTRACTIONS

*May not be painful, may feel sensation of baby “balling up”.
Not normal to have five or more contractions in one hour.*

2. MENSTRUAL LIKE CRAMPS

Low in abdomen, may come and go or be constant.

3. LOW DULL BACKACHE

Felt below waist

May come and go or be constant.

4. INCREASED PELVIC PRESSURE

*Heaviness in lower abdomen, pelvis, back or thighs
Feeling baby is pushing down and a feeling that comes and goes*

5. ABDOMINAL PRESSURE

*Continuous, nagging pain (like gas, indigestion or flu)
With or without diarrhea*

6. CHANGE IN VAGINAL DISCHARGE

*Normal to have increased discharge in pregnancy, as long as not accompanied by itching or burning.
Not normal to change to watery or blood tinged discharge.*

HOW TO CHECK FOR UTERINE CONTRACTIONS:

- Empty your bladder and lie down on left side for one hour. Place your fingertips lightly on your uterus.
- When the uterus feels light and hard, then soft: that is the contraction.
- In order to know how often the contractions are happening, note the time between the start of one tightening to the start of the next tightening.
- It is normal to have some uterine contractions during pregnancy. But if you feel contractions every 10 minutes, or more than 5 in one hour, this is too many.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIECE ANY WARNING SIGNS:

- Call your doctor immediately if you have fluid, blood, or a sudden increase in vaginal discharge.
- For any other symptoms, lie on your side. Drink two glasses or more of liquids while you put your hands on your abdomen and time your contractions for an hour.
- If after an hour your symptoms are gone, go on with whatever you were doing.
- If after an hour you still have symptoms, call your doctor or the hospital.