

READY, SET, NOT YET...

These last weeks of pregnancy sometimes seem to go forever. Contractions may get stronger at times and make you wonder if this could be it. Sometimes it's frustrating to come to the hospital with these labor pains, only to be sent home without a baby in your arms. Contractions may stop or your labor may be in its early stages. This pre-labor period is helping your body get ready for the big day, but not yet. We recommend that during this early, pre-labor period you find a comfortable place to relax.

In the mean time, if you are finding it difficult to concentrate on anything but the birth of this baby, here are some tips to help keep you comfortable through these hours, days or weeks while you are waiting.

If labor has stopped or slowed down:

- Sleep or just rest
- Snuggle with or be close to your partner
- Listen to relaxing music
- Eat or drink something
- Get a hug
- Go for a walk
- Get a foot, hand, back, or shoulders massage
- Go shopping
- Go to a movie or rent the funniest video you can find
- Go to you favorite room in the apartment or house and slowly relax each part of your body.

Remind Yourself That You Will Not Be Pregnant Forever

As contractions get stronger you may need added ways to cope with labor:

- Go for a walk
- Rock in a rocking chair
- Take a shower or bath
- Slow dance
- Relax between contractions
- Change positions often
- Find someone to tell you what a good job you are doing
- Try slow, deep breathing
- Drink water, juice or other clear liquids
- Use lip balm on dry lips
- Watch a movie
- Hold hands with someone you love
- Pray
- Tell jokes, listen to jokes
- Call your labor coach
- Suck on a sour lollipop or popsicle
- Cool yourself with a washcloth dipped in ice water

- Use the bathroom often
- For lower backache try ice packs or heat or switch between hot and cold; use tennis balls or rolling pin or doorknob for counter pressure / **MOVE YOUR PELVIS.**

Congratulate yourself for being such a patient new parent. Think of the baby coming down and out to meet you very soon.

Instructions:

When should you come to the hospital?

- Anytime you have bright red vaginal bleeding - like a period
- When your water breaks or if you notice a leaking of fluids or wetness in your underwear
- When you are having strong contractions every _____ minutes for an hour
- If you notice your baby does not move as much as usual

Special instructions: