



Signs of Labor



Overview

You're expecting to give birth soon. But will you know when it's time? Let's learn about some common signs of labor.

Nesting and lightening

Some women get a burst of energy before labor begins. You may have a strong urge to finish last-minute tasks and get ready for the baby's arrival. We call this "nesting." You may also notice a physical change: a feeling that your baby has settled lower in your abdomen. We call this feeling "lightening."

Vaginal discharge

Another sign is an increase in vaginal discharge. During pregnancy, a plug of mucus covers the opening of your womb. Late in your pregnancy, this plug comes out. You may also have vaginal discharge that's clear or pink with blood.

Water breaking

As labor begins (or during labor) you have another type of discharge. It happens when the amniotic sac in your womb breaks open. Clear fluid comes out of your vagina. It can be a slow trickle or a sudden rush. When this happens, we say your "water" has "broken."

Contractions

And finally, with labor comes contractions. This is when your womb tightens and then relaxes. You may actually feel some contractions in the last months of pregnancy. But as true labor begins, they grow stronger and begin to happen regularly. Gradually, they happen closer and closer together.

Conclusion

Every woman experiences labor differently. For more information, talk to your doctor.