



When Your Water Breaks

This information is intended to help mothers understand what to expect when their water breaks.



What are Ruptured Membranes?

When your water breaks, it is called rupture of membranes. Before birth, your baby is surrounded by a sac filled with amniotic fluid. In about 10% of women, the amniotic sac may rupture or leak before contractions start and labour begins. Most women will go into labour within 24 hours of the water breaking. You will continue to leak fluid until your baby is born. **Once your water breaks, call Labour and Delivery, Grey Bruce Health Services, Owen Sound at 519-376-2121 ext. 2321 to make a plan for your care.**

What You Need to Know at Home

- Rest is encouraged. Most women will begin labour within 24 hours of their water breaking. Labour is tiring work and you will need your energy.
- Continue to eat and drink. Light meals that are easily digested are best.
- Showers, or a heating pad may help to ease any backache or early labour discomfort. You should not take a bath.
- You can also take 500mg of Tylenol and 50mg of Gravol to ease early labour discomfort and to help you rest.
- Take your temperature every four to six hours. Do not eat or drink anything hot or cold 10 minutes before taking your temperature.
- Be aware of your baby's movements. Call Labour and Delivery if you do not feel 10 movements in two hours.
- Do not have sexual intercourse.

(over...)

When Your Water Breaks

When to Return to Labour and Delivery

Call Labour and Delivery and plan to return at the recommended time or if you have any of the following:

- Decreased baby movements.
- Feeling unwell.
- Fever higher than 38°C (100.4°F).
- Regular contractions, every 5 minutes.
- Vaginal discharge-foul smelling, brown or green fluid, or bleeding.

If you are not sure about what you are feeling, or have any other concerns while you are at home, please call Labour and Delivery, Grey Bruce Health Services, Owen Sound at 519-376-2121 ext. 2321.

Notes: