**What To Do In Early Labor**

When you feel you’re in labor, it can be an exciting time. As much as possible, go about your day as you normally would, taking the time to pause during contractions. Do the best you can to resist the urge to focus too much attention on your contractions.

Contact me when you begin laboring during the day so I can make necessary preparations for my family. If you go into labor at night or the early morning, see if you are able to rest after following the suggestions below. Call me at night if you feel you need me to be with you within a couple of hours.

At any time when your partner needs some suggestions, refer to the “Tips for the Labor Partner” handout or the notes you created about comfort and relaxation measures that he can help you with.

**During the Day**

* Work on your early labor project (make some cookies, work on your baby book, or another project you set aside to do during labor)
* Stay hydrated; drink plenty of water after a light meal, take sips between contractions
* Eat easily digestible foods like whole grains, non-citrus fruits, and vegetables
* Take a walk; be outside in nature
* Don’t be too active; conserve your energy for some possible long work ahead. Alternate activity with rest
* Use bathroom frequently

**During the Night/Early Morning**

* Get a small snack and drink and try to go back to sleep
* Take a warm bath and try to go back to sleep

**If you are experiencing back labor (extreme pain in your back), we want to do things that will maximize the potential for baby to find the right path:**

* Put on some upbeat music and dance!
* Scrub the floors (really!)
* If you have young children (or even if you don’t), get down on the floor and crawl around with them.
* Have your partner apply counter pressure to your back or do the double hip squeeze to help with the pain.