

How to Know If I'm in Labor Guide

How to Know if I'm in Labor: A Simple Guide for New Parents

It's normal to wonder if "this is it!" in the final weeks of pregnancy. Here are some clear signs to help you know when labor may be starting.

Signs of Early Labor

- Regular contractions that gradually get closer together, stronger, and longer.
- Back or pelvic pressure that doesn't go away with rest or movement.
- Bloody show (pink, clearish, yellow, or brown mucus) as your cervix begins to change.
- Loose stools or cramping as your body gets ready.

Water Breaking

- A gush or steady trickle of fluid from the vagina may mean your amniotic sac has broken.
- Note the time, color, and amount and let your provider know.

X False Labor (Braxton Hicks)

- Contractions are irregular, don't get stronger, and may stop with rest, hydration, or position change.
- Usually felt in the front of the belly, not the back.

准 When to Call Your Provider

- Contractions are 5 minutes apart, lasting 1 minute, for at least 1 hour (the "5-1-1 rule").
- Your water breaks.
- You notice heavy bleeding.
- You feel a decrease in baby's movements.
- You're unsure—when in doubt, always call!

Remember: Every labor is unique. Trust your body, listen to your instincts, and don't hesitate to reach out for support. You've got this!