

Preterm labour can happen in any pregnancy

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WHAT is preterm labour?

Preterm labour is labour that starts too early (more than three weeks before your due date). It may lead to *preterm birth*.

WHY be concerned about preterm labour?

Preterm babies are at greater risk the earlier they are born. They are more likely to:

- have trouble breathing, feeding and keeping warm
- suffer long-term problems (seeing, learning, walking, breathing)
- be too small and weak to live
- suffer from infections
- have longer hospital stays

WHEN is preterm labour more likely?

Half of all preterm births occur to women with no known risk factors. These factors increase a woman's risk of preterm labour:

- tobacco smoke
- previous preterm birth
- injury (including family violence)
- alcohol and drug use
- being pregnant with twins or triplets

Call the Calgary Health Link at **943-LINK** (5465) for more information on preterm labour.

Foothills Medical Centre (Labour and Delivery) 944-1351
1403 - 29 St NW

Rockyview General Hospital (Maternity Triage Nurse) 943-3191
7007 - 14 St SW

Peter Lougheed Centre (Antepartum) 943-5732
3500 - 26 Ave NE

WHAT reduces your risk?

Take care of yourself. You will reduce your risk of preterm labour if you:

- *Seek prenatal care early in pregnancy, including dental care.* Consult a doctor or midwife and visit your dentist.
- *Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke.* Call the Calgary Health Region at 781-1450 for information on Expecting to Quit, a free stop smoking class for pregnant women and new moms.
- *Avoid alcohol and drugs.* Call AADAC at 1-866-332-2322 for information and counselling.
- *Avoid all injuries.* Wear a seatbelt when in a vehicle. Seek help if experiencing family violence. Report injuries to your doctor.
- **Choose a healthy lifestyle. Call the Calgary Health Region at 781-1450 to find out about prenatal classes. Call the Best Beginning program at 228-8221 for information and resources if you are living on a low income.**

Tear off and post on your fridge or elsewhere

Preterm labour - Know the signs

These signs may be related to preterm labour:

- contractions (may be painful or painless)
- cramps (may feel like menstrual cramps or gas pains)
- unusual fluid or bleeding from the vagina
- change or increase in vaginal discharge
- full or heavy feeling in the vagina
- changes in low back pain

The phone number of my doctor or midwife:

The phone number of my delivery hospital:



calgary health region
calgaryhealthregion.ca

Know what to do

Contact your doctor or midwife or go to the hospital right away if you think you are having preterm labour.

Trust your instincts

Calgary Health Link, 943-LINK (5465)

Signs of preterm labour should never be ignored. Early response to preterm labour reduces the likelihood of preterm birth. It is important to get to the hospital early because it can make a big difference to your baby's health.