

If your waters break before labour starts - information for women about pre-labour rupture of membranes (PROM)

What is PROM?

Sometimes a woman's waters break before labour starts. This happens in about one in twenty pregnancies and is known as pre-labour rupture of the membranes or PROM.

If you are given this leaflet by a midwife, it will mean that she has diagnosed PROM, you and the midwife have discussed your diagnosis and decided that it is safe for you to go home and wait for your labour to start. It is likely that this will happen naturally within 24 hours.

Things to look out for once your waters have broken

You should contact the Triage line if:

- You feel unwell or feverish. We advise you check your temperature twice a day, contact us if it is above 37.2 degrees centigrade.
- Your waters become brown or green.
- Your baby's movements slow down or stop.
- You go into labour.
- You are worried for any reason.

Please ring **0118 322 7304** at any time for advice.

If you do not go into labour after PROM

If you do not go into labour spontaneously after your waters have broken, please phone the Delivery Suite on _____ at _____.

Ring 0118 322 7215 to confirm a bed is available before you are admitted.

Your admission will be a priority. However, if the Delivery Suite is very busy, the midwife in charge will arrange a time for your admission, depending on circumstances at the time.

What happens when I come in?

If you are more than 37 weeks pregnant and your waters have broken, but you have not gone into labour (i.e. you are not having contractions) you will be admitted to either the Day Assessment Unit or Delivery Suite. The midwife will assess you and monitor your baby's heart rate. A vaginal examination will be necessary to decide the next stage of treatment. If on examination the cervix is not dilated or thinning out then we recommend Prostin gel is inserted around the cervix. This is a hormone which helps to "ripen" the cervix for labour and stimulates contractions. Following the insertion of Prostin you will be admitted to the antenatal ward or induction suite until the review in 6 hours. If contractions do not start within this six hour period we would recommend a hormone infusion to encourage contractions. Oxytocin is given through a drip and enters the bloodstream through a tiny tube into a vein in the arm. Your midwife will explain this to you further. For this to happen you will need to be transferred to the delivery suite and be cared for by a midwife. Therefore, occasionally there is a short delay until we can facilitate this.

Further information

NICE guideline – Induction of labour CG 70

<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG70/PublicInfo/pdf/English>

Also:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11837/36280/36280.pdf>

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12012/41272/41272.pdf>

<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12012/41255/41255.pdf>

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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