



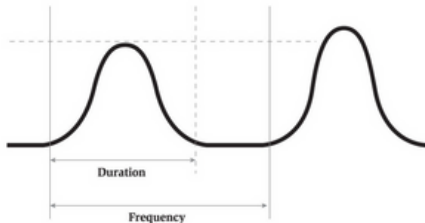
## AM I IN LABOUR?

### Signs & Symptoms

- Upset Stomach, Cramping, Back Pain. This may also show up as vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- Bloody show/ loss of mucous plug. This is usually light pink, mucousy discharge. It can happen days or weeks before labour actually starts.
- Nesting. A sudden (notable) burst of energy, with an urge to get things prepared for baby.
- Waters releasing/ leaking. This may be a gush or a trickle.
- Contractions/ Waves/ Surges. A feeling of pulling or tightening in your uterus that begins to form a rhythmic pattern. In true labour, they become longer, stronger and closer together. They will not change their pattern when you change position or take a bath (although this will ease some discomfort). Contractions and cervical changes are some of the surest ways to know that you're in labour.

## When should I go to the Hospital or Birth Centre?

- Use the (4) 5-1-1 (2) Rule to see if you should call your care provider and/or go to your preferred place to birth.
- Contractions should be 4-5 minutes apart, with a length of 1 minute, and lasting in this pattern for 1 to 2 hours.
- If you have any concerns, call your care provider and/or doula for support and advice.



## Tips for Early Labour

It's normal for early labour to last for a while. Here are some suggestions to help support you through this time.

- Get some rest, sleep if you can.
- Take a bath or a shower & relax.
- Distract yourself with things you love to do - go for a walk, have conversations, watch t.v. or a movie.
- Enjoy some comfort food, have some tea.
- Laugh and enjoy the company of your partner, doula, friends or family.
- Do some light bodywork like cat/ cow or move on a stability/ birthing ball.
- If you're feeling contractions all in your back/ tailbone, walk up the stairs sideways or use Rebozo techniques.



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