

Induction of Labor

Induction of labor is the use of medications or other methods to start labor. Your doctor may recommend induction of labor for the following reasons:

- Pregnancy greater than 41 weeks
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes (gestational or pregestational)
- Concerns for fetal or maternal well-being or fetal growth
- Either too much or too little fluid around baby

Non-medical induction may be considered at any point *after* 39 weeks of pregnancy following discussion with your healthcare provider.



Confirming Your Induction

The night before your induction we will call you to confirm that you are scheduled for the next day. **On the day of** your induction, we will call and let you know when to come to the hospital. You may be called at any time from early morning to late evening.

Contact Us

For additional information, please call (603) 663-2162 or visit our website at: ElliotHospital.org/Maternity



INDUCTION OF LABOR

What to Expect



What to Expect

On the day of your induction, we will call you and tell you when to arrive. You are welcome to have **two** support people with you during labor.

When you arrive, you will be shown to your room. You will change into a gown. Your nurse will ask you admission questions, start an IV, and place the fetal monitor on your belly.

Your provider will check your cervix and discuss next steps. **Induction can take anywhere from half a day to several days!** It can be helpful to share this information with family and friends.

Throughout your induction your nurse and doctor or midwife will keep you updated regarding labor progress and next steps.

What to Pack

While we have everything that you *need*, it is nice to bring some things from home, including:

- Toiletries
- Cozy non-skid socks or slippers
- Phone charger
- Pillow
- Streaming device, books, games (Wi-Fi is available)
- Change of clothes for support person

Cervical Ripening

Before the start of labor, the cervix begins to soften, thin, and open. If this has not happened before your induction, we will start by preparing your cervix for labor. This is also called cervical ripening.

Cervical ripening can be done either with **medication** you take by mouth or vaginally, or by **mechanical** methods such as a cervical ripening balloon or rods. Often these methods will be used at the same time.

Cervical ripening can take between **12 - 24+ hours**. During this time, you may feel mild cramping or contractions. It can be helpful to think of this as labor preparation, rather than labor. We suggest that you bring things to distract and entertain you during this stage.

Occasionally your provider may offer you the option of having a mechanical dilator placed and then going home. In this case you would return the next morning to continue your induction.

As you prepare for the active phase of labor it is important to eat, drink, and try to rest.



Active Labor

Once your cervix is prepared for labor (or if your body has already done this) we will start to induce regular uterine contractions.

This is usually done by either:

- IV medication
- Breaking the bag of water

While cervical ripening can take up to several days, this is the part of labor where, once you are having strong, regular, painful contractions, labor will go faster.

Your nurse will encourage you to change positions frequently in order to help your baby move into the birth canal. They will also work with you and your provider to make an individualized plan for pain management.