



Building Blocks to Brighter Futures

Resources to Help Make Sure All Our Kids are "AOK"

Babies Born Too Soon



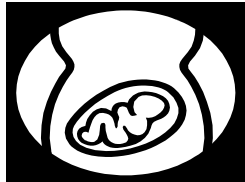
What every pregnant woman should know:

What is premature labor?



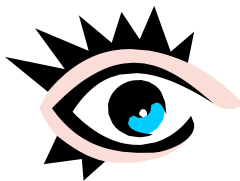
Preterm or premature labor is when you go into labor 3 or more weeks before your due date. This is too early and your baby could be born too soon.

Get early prenatal care



Get regular prenatal checkups. Start as soon as you know you are pregnant. Keep every appointment.

Learn the warning signs and check yourself daily



- Contractions every 10 minutes or more often
- Clear, pink or brownish fluid (water) leaking from your vagina
- The feeling that your baby is pushing down
- Low, dull backache
- Cramps that feel like your period
- Cramps with or without diarrhea

This information was adapted from March of Dimes Health Education Center Materials – 1-888-MODIMES

For more information, please visit the Kane County Health Department's website at kanehealth.com/aok.htm or call 630-208-3801





INFORMATION SHEET: Premature or Preterm Labor

When a baby is born prematurely, before 37 weeks, there can be many problems. Premature birth is the leading cause of newborn death and many disabilities. It can happen to any baby, without warning and for no known reason. Today, one in eight babies is born too small or too soon.

Three groups of women who are at greatest risk of preterm labor:

Preterm labor and delivery can happen to any woman. But it happens more often to some women than to others. If a woman has any of these three risk factors, it is especially important for her to know the signs and symptoms of preterm labor and know what to do.

- Women who are pregnant with twins, triplets or more
- Women who have had previous preterm birth
- Women with certain uterine or cervical abnormalities

Things every pregnant woman should know:

Take Care of Yourself and Your Baby

- Get early and regular prenatal care. Start as soon as you know you are pregnant. Go to every appointment
- Stay away from alcohol and cigarettes. They are not good for you or your baby. Street drugs may start preterm labor
- Try to avoid stress – ask family and friends for help
- Talk to your health care provider about what you can do to reduce your risk for preterm labor

Know the Signs of Preterm Labor

- Contractions every 10 minutes or more often
- Clear, pink or brownish fluid (water) leaking from your vagina
- The feeling that your baby is pushing down
- Low, dull backache
- Cramps that feel like your period
- Cramps with or without diarrhea

Know what to do

Call your health care provider (nurse, doctor or midwife) or go to the hospital right away if you think you are having preterm labor, or if you have any of the warning signs. Call even if you have only one sign.

Your health care provider may tell you to:

- Come in to the office or go to the hospital for a checkup
- Stop what you are doing and rest on your left side for one hour
- Drink 2-3 glasses of water or juice (not coffee or soda)
- If the symptoms get worse, or do not go away after one hour, call your provider again or go to the hospital. If the symptoms get better, relax for the rest of the day

* The information presented in this fact sheet was adapted from March of Dimes Health Education Center Materials. For more information on this topic, please visit www.marchofdimes.com or call 1-888-MODIMES.

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