

Pre-labour Rupture of Membranes at Term

Reference Number: ULHT-LFT-3578 v1

Issued: November 2024

Review Date: November 2026

Pre-labour rupture of membranes is when your waters have broken, you are more than 37 weeks pregnant and labour has not yet started. Around 60% of women will go into natural labour within 24 hours.

What happens now?

If all is well with your midwife check-up, they will advise that you go home and wait for labour to start. There is a slightly higher chance of infection (increasing from 5 in 1000 to 10 in 1000) once your waters have broken.

Because of this increased chance we offer induction of labour if you haven't gone into labour yourself by 24 hours. You may choose to wait longer – please talk with your midwife about this.

What to look for

At home you should watch out for certain things and contact the hospital if you notice any of the following:

- The colour of the fluid that you are losing changes colour from clear
- You notice an offensive smell
- You feel unwell
- You experience a change in your baby's movement pattern
- You experience regular contractions and think labour is starting
- We do not recommend vaginal intercourse once your waters have broken as we do not know for sure whether or not this may increase the risk of infection. You can bathe or shower as usual.

If you have any concerns or would like advice or support from a midwife please do not hesitate to call us during this time.

Waiting for labour to start

Waiting for labour can be frustrating and tiring. You can try the following to help and also ask your midwife for other tips:

- Keep active and upright – this will help your baby to move into a good position for labour, helping baby's head move down and apply pressure to your cervix
- Eat and drink regularly. You need to keep your energy levels up and you may not feel like eating much after your labour starts

- Gain support from your birth partners – extra encouragement and support, massage, distraction techniques
- Water can be a great way to ease pain. Try a deep, warm bath or a shower
- Keep the atmosphere calm, quiet and dark – now is not the time for visitors! Research shows keeping the environment darkened naturally increases oxytocin (labour hormone) production.

What if I do not go into labour by 24 hours?

If your labour has not started by itself then we would recommend coming into the hospital for an induction of labour. This is where we start it for you. This would usually be started by inserting a gel into your vagina.

If you do not wish to be induced we will be happy to discuss this with you and make a plan that is individual to your circumstances and preferences.

Maternity

Lincoln Labour Ward	01522 573889
Lincoln AAC	01522 573138
Boston Labour Ward	01205 445424
Boston AAC	01205 445144

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