

# Induction Of Labor

There are many reasons that you and your doctor or midwife may be considering induction of labor. The most important goal is, of course, a safe delivery for you and your baby. There are some situations where waiting for natural labor to begin may not be ideal for you. Some of these are:

- Your baby is growing very large, and your chances of having a successful vaginal birth may be decreasing.
- Complications such as high blood pressure or diabetes make an early delivery necessary.
- Your bag of water has broken without natural labor starting—increasing the risk of infection for you and your baby.
- A history of very fast labor makes a controlled delivery safer and more pleasant for you and baby.

If you and your doctor or midwife decide to induce labor, there are some things you should know about what to expect. Your provider will also talk with you about which agents will be used to attempt labor induction.

Labor is usually induced with an intravenous medication called Pitocin. Pitocin is a synthetic form of the hormone Oxytocin that is produced naturally in your brain. This hormone causes the uterus to contract. Induction does not always mean that labor will begin and progress to a vaginal delivery. Pitocin will cause the uterus to contract, but cervical dilation (which actually defines labor), may not necessarily occur. After examining you, your doctor or midwife will be able to estimate how likely he or she believes it is that induction will work. Sometimes it is possible to stop an induction if labor is not progressing, and start again at another time. But it is also possible that you will need a Cesarean section if induction is not successful.

Pitocin is given to you in an IV solution, which is carefully monitored by a specially trained Registered Nurse. The medication is given in very small amounts and will be increased over time until the uterus is contracting regularly and labor is progressing. When you are receiving Pitocin, it is important to have continuous monitoring for both you and your baby. You may still be able to walk around using a special portable “telemetry” monitor, and in most cases, walking will help your labor to progress.

You may have concerns about pain that is associated with induction of labor. When induction works as we hope it will, there is pain with contractions, as there is in natural labor. All of the same options for pain medication in labor are available to you with induction. You may eat a small breakfast of easily digestible food before coming to the hospital.

**Early on the morning that your induction is scheduled, you will need to call Labor & Delivery at North Florida Regional Women's Center at (352) 333-5300. We ask that you call at 5:00 AM and ask to speak with the Charge Nurse.** She will advise you about the availability of labor rooms on that day.

**If there are many patients in labor, your induction WILL BE DELAYED OR CANCELLED. Please make plans with the understanding that they may need to be changed!**