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When to Call in Labour for Your First Birth

Call between 9 am to 9 pm

- Heads up page – if you are thinking you are in labour
- If your water breaks in the night and the fluid is clear and feeling baby move, put on a pad and get some sleep; call us at 9 am to let us know. If you start having contractions see the “call at anytime” section. It is normal for the fluid to have a pink tinge or streaks of blood.

Call at Any Time of Day or Night

- Contraction pattern:
 - *Frequency*: every 3 mins or less (measuring from the beginning of one contraction to beginning of the next contraction)
 - *Length*: lasting 60 seconds or more
 - *Strength*: strong and has been steadily increasing
= this has been happening for 1 hr
- Water breaks and is discoloured = green, brown, black; and/or has a strong smell; GBS positive
- Bright red bleeding like a menstrual period
 - Normal to have mucousy bleeding = bloody show
- You should continue to feel the baby move here and there. It can be more difficult to feel movement with contractions because you are focused on the contraction. If you are not feeling movements, call your midwife.
- If you have concerns.

Coping in Labour

- Avoid timing contractions until they feel frequent and/or you can no longer be distracted from them
- Try to get a nap/rest if you think you are in early labour
- Resist the temptation to text multiple family/friends in early labour as this might keep you from resting effectively
- Do some light activity; go for a walk, stretch, yoga, sit and move hips on an exercise type ball (if you have one)
- Distractions: play a game, watch a movie
- Once you can no longer rest or be distracted: move with your contractions, keep changing positions, rest in a side lying position, stay off your back, bath or shower
- If having lots of back pain: forward leaning positions such as being on your hands and knees; your support person can apply pressure to your lower back while having contractions
- Try to focus on your breathing during your contraction and take a big cleansing breath after each contraction
- Drink lots of fluids
- Eat meals if you feel like it or small snacks
- Empty your bladder every few hours