

Giving Birth After Your Due Date

Valley Regional Hospital

Pregnancy usually lasts 40 weeks, but most people give birth between 38 to 42 weeks. Most babies are born within 1 week before or after their due date. Think of your due date as a best guess.

Near the end of your pregnancy, pay more attention to your baby's movements. **A baby should move 6 times or more in 2 hours. If you do not feel your baby moving, call the Labour and Delivery Unit at 902-679-2657, extension 3052 or 3050.** We may ask you to come to the hospital for fetal monitoring to check on your baby.

What is a Post-Dates Delivery (PDD)?

- A PDD is when you deliver your baby after your due date. This is safe for most babies.
- As you get closer to 40 weeks of pregnancy, your doctor may talk to you about the chance of a PDD. You will need to pay close attention to your baby's movements and be flexible about your delivery plan.

What is a Post-Dates Assessment (PDA)?

If you have not given birth by your due date, your doctor will arrange for you to have a PDA. This will be done at the Labour and Delivery Unit 1 week after your due date. Your doctor will check you and your baby, and talk with you about what will happen next.

What will happen during the PDA?

- When you arrive at the Labour and Delivery Unit, check in with the clerk. Then, you will meet a labour and delivery nurse. They will:
 - › ask about your pregnancy, your baby's movements, and your health.
 - › check your temperature, blood pressure, pulse (heart rate), and contractions
 - › check your baby's heart rate.
- The nurse may do a vaginal (internal) exam. This will help us choose the best way to induce (start) your labour, if needed. The nurse will talk with you about the different ways an induction can be done.
- You may be asked for a urine (pee) sample.
- We will start to plan for your induction. If you have not given birth by 10 days after your due date, you will need to have a 2nd PDA. We will book an appointment for a 2nd PDA, if needed.
- **If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your nurse during your PDA.**

What will happen during the 2nd PDA?

- The doctor and nurse will talk with you about your induction and delivery plan. If your cervix (place where your baby leaves your uterus) is **not ready** for labour, we will talk with you about ways to get it ready. These include:
 - › Taking a pill (by mouth)
 - › Using medication in the vagina (vaginal insert or gel)
 - › Placing a balloon catheter (thin, hollow tube) through the opening of the cervix
- If your cervix is **ready** for labour, ways to induce labour include:
 - › Giving you a medication called oxytocin (also called the “drip”) through an intravenous (I.V.) tube put in a vein in your hand or arm
 - › Breaking your water

How do I get ready for my PDA(s)?

- Eat breakfast before your appointment. If you need to stay at the hospital for a long time, we will plan for your meals.
- Bring your provincial health card with you.
- Usually, you will go home after your PDA, but you may be asked to stay at the hospital. You and your health care provider will decide together before your PDA.
- We may need to wait before starting your induction to make sure you and your baby are given the best care.

My 1st PDA is on: _____ (date) at _____ (time)

Questions?

Call the Labour and Delivery Unit at:

- › Phone: 902-679-2657, extension 3052 or 3050

Call the Labour and Delivery Unit right away if:

- › you have any vaginal bleeding.
- › your water breaks.
- › you have a headache.
- › you see spots in front of your eyes.
- › your baby stops moving as much.
- › you think you are in labour, or do not feel well.
- › you have any other concerns about your pregnancy.