

Induction of Labour and Cervical Ripening with Oral Misoprostol (Prostaglandin E₁) (Cytotec®)

What is misoprostol (Cytotec®)?

Misoprostol is a pill that contains a medication called prostaglandin E₁. Prostaglandin E₁ is used to soften the cervix to get it ready for labour and to cause labour contractions. Cytotec® is the brand name of this medication.

Misoprostol is taken by mouth. It can be taken every 4 hours if needed. You may need to take it up to 3 times.

Your doctor or midwife will talk with you about whether misoprostol for cervical ripening and induction of labour is right for you.

What should I expect when I get misoprostol?

- A doctor or midwife will talk with you before you get misoprostol. Your blood pressure, temperature, pulse and breathing will be checked. You may have blood work done. Your baby's heart rate will be monitored for 30 minutes to make sure it is normal.
- Misoprostol is taken by mouth with a glass of water. It is important to swallow the pill quickly before it dissolves in your mouth.
- After you take misoprostol, your baby's heart rate and any contractions will be monitored for 30 minutes to 1 hour. After that time, as long as you and your baby are fine and you are not in active labour, you will be able to walk around.
- While in hospital you can do regular activities, eat regular meals and shower. Remember to rest!
- After about 4 hours you will be checked by your doctor or midwife. They will talk with you about whether you should take more misoprostol.

What are the possible complications of misoprostol?

A small number of women using misoprostol will have fever, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. Some women (1-2%) may have excessive (a high number) of contractions. These may or may not stress your baby.

Tell a member of your health care team if:

- You have regular contractions 5 minutes or less apart.
- You have vaginal bleeding (like a period).
- You think your water has broken.
- You feel your baby's movements have changed (either more or less).
- You have concerns and are not sure what to do.

**What are your questions? Please ask.
We are here to help you.**