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We help patients to become better patients! We can help you understand your health and medical problems better so you can get better care in partnership with your Doctor.

OUR VISION

We think patients are the largest untapped healthcare resource and that Information therapy is the most Powerful Medicine !

OUR GOALS

1. Encouraging health insurance companies to invest in patient education.
2. Advocating information therapy.
3. Setting up a national network of patient education centers.
4. Developing patient educational materials in Indian Languages for the web.

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Labor Management



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Health Education Library For People

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Stages of Labor

**LET'S HELP
ERADICATE
IGNORANCE**

Three Stages Of Labor

Every woman's labor is unique, even from one pregnancy to the next. In some cases, labor is over in a matter of hours — or less. In other cases, labor tests a mother's physical and emotional stamina. The stages of labor unfold in three distinct parts.

Stage 1: Early labor and active labor



The first stage of labor occurs when the cervix opens (dilates) and thins out (effaces) to allow the baby to move into the birth canal. This is the longest of the three stages of labor. It's actually divided into two phases of its own — early labor and active labor.

During early labor, your cervix will begin to dilate. You may feel mild to moderately strong contractions during early labor. They may last 30 to 60 seconds and come every five to 20 minutes. As your cervix begins to open, you may notice a thick, stringy, blood-tinged discharge from your vagina.

How long it lasts: Early labor is unpredictable. It may last for hours or even days.

What you can do: Early labor isn't particularly uncomfortable. You may feel like doing household chores, taking a walk or watching a movie. Or you might simply continue your daily activities.

It may also help to: Take a shower or bath, listen to relaxing music, have a gentle massage, try slow, deep breathing, change positions, drink water, juice or other clear liquids, eat light, healthy

snacks, apply ice packs or heat to your lower back. During active labor, your cervix will dilate to 10 centimeters. Your contractions will become stronger and progressively longer. You may feel increasing pressure in your back as well. If you haven't headed to your labor and delivery facility yet, now's the time.

Your initial excitement may wane as your labor progresses and the pain intensifies. Don't feel that you're giving up if you ask for pain medication or anesthesia.

How long it lasts: On average, active labor lasts up to eight hours. For others — especially those who've had a previous vaginal delivery — active labor is much shorter.

What you can do: Try breathing and relaxation techniques to combat your growing discomfort.

It may also help to: Change positions, rock in a rocking chair, roll on a birthing ball, take a warm shower or bath, place a cool, damp cloth on your forehead, take a walk, stopping to breathe through contractions, have a massage between contractions.

If you feel the urge to push, try to hold back until you've been told you're fully dilated and it's time to push. It may help to pant or blow. Pushing too soon may cause your cervix to tear or swell, which can delay delivery or cause troublesome bleeding.

Stage 2: You'll deliver your baby during the second stage of labor.

How long it lasts: It can take from a few minutes up to several hours or more to push your baby into the world.

What you can do: Push! You may be encouraged to push with each contraction to speed the process. Or you might take it more slowly, letting nature do the work until you feel the urge to push.

Squatting or sitting works well for others. Try different positions until you find one that feels best. Bear down and concentrate on pushing where it counts.

Feeling the baby's head between your legs or seeing it in a mirror can help you stay motivated. After your baby's head is delivered, his or her airway will be cleared and your doctor will make sure the umbilical cord is free. The rest of your baby's body will follow shortly.

Stage 3: Delivery of the placenta

During the third stage of labor, your health care provider must deliver the placenta and make sure your bleeding is under control.

How long it lasts: The placenta is typically delivered in about five to 10 minutes. In some cases, it may take up to 30 minutes.

What you can do: Relax! You'll continue to have mild contractions. Your Doctor may massage your lower abdomen to encourage your uterus to contract and expel the placenta. Your health care provider will also determine whether you need stitches or other repair work.



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