

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finally made it to the last 4-6 weeks of your pregnancy! Now is a good time to begin preparing for your labor and birth. Below is some information that may be helpful.

When to call- (depending on your history of previous deliveries)
(Call the office number 24 hours a day 7 days a week at **(563)355-1853**)

1. Decreased fetal movement (baby should still move 10 times in a two hour period each day)
2. Regular contractions every 3 to 5 minutes, lasting about 1 minute for at least an hour or more and getting stronger. (Usually they are strong enough to take your breath away and you can't talk through them.) If you are able to rest/sleep through contractions, please do! You will need the rest, true hard labor will keep you awake.
3. If you think your water is broke. (A large gush of fluid and/or continuous uncontrollable leaking)
4. Anytime you are uncertain or are unsure of what to do next.

Please always call prior to going to the hospital. Call (563)355-1853 and ask for the midwife on call. When going to the hospital, check in at admitting or the ER desk. They will take you up to the Birth Center.

WHAT TO EXPECT

You may "Lose your mucus plug" (moderate to large amount of thick/yellow mucus with streaks of red) anytime from one day to one month before labor. There is no need to call if you notice this sign. Others may simply notice an increase in daily vaginal discharge. Call if you notice vaginal itching, burning or a foul odor with the discharge.

Contraction pains often start in your back and wrap to the front. Your uterus will feel very firm to the touch during a contraction. They often feel like menstrual cramps and progress into painful tightening and pelvic/rectal pressure. Effective contractions will usually last about 1 to 1 _ minutes and happen every 2 to 5 minutes. In early labor, you may want to try a warm bath, back massage, drinking lots of water and resting to help relieve pain. Spending time on your hands and knees (as if crawling) may help relieve back pain and pressure.