

Signs labour has started!

Lower back and stomach discomfort:

This is common in early and late pregnancy, the feeling of period like pain, aching or discomfort. If you are around your due time, this can be the sensations of the early onset of labour. If this is labour, the sensations will increase in sensation and frequency.

Waters breaking:

This can be the sign of labour starting for some women. Once the amniotic sac separates (waters break), there is more pressure down onto the cervix which helps with the release of oxytocin, the labour hormone. Waters can separate at any time, before labour starts, at the beginning of labour or closer to the birth of your baby. Some babies are born in the sacs!

Diarrhoea:

In the last few hours and days of pregnancy it is not uncommon for women to have frequent visits to the toilet to empty their bowels. This is all part of the body softening with the increase of prostaglandins. Some women will experience quite a few trips to the toilet prior to labour starting.

Contractions/Surges/Waves of labour:

These are the sensations of labour, what you feel throughout the labour and birth process. Labour is rhythmic, the waves of labour (contractions) come and go, starting slowly and mildly with longer resting spaces between them. As you get closer to the birth of your baby, they become stronger in sensation, last longer and are more frequent, this is a great sign your baby is not far away! These rhythmic contractions are thinning and drawing the cervix upwards, shortening the muscles fibres of the uterus, allowing the body to open. Women feel these sensations with varying degrees of intensity, for some the waves of labour are intense towards the birth of their baby, for others the sensations are very low.