

HEALTH TIPS

Make Health Happen

Preterm labor

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PRETERM LABOR

Preterm labor can mean your baby is born too soon. Preterm labor is labor that begins before your due date and before the 37th week of pregnancy.

Sometimes, if you know you're going into labor early, your doctor may be able to stop it before your baby is born too soon.

Take the Preterm Labor Quiz to see what you know about preterm labor.

1. Which risk factors below may mean you could have preterm labor?

- You have had preterm labor before.
- You have infections or problems with your vagina or uterus.
- You are pregnant with twins or multiples.
- You are a victim of domestic violence.
- All of the above

Correct answer is e, all of the above. Talk to your doctor about your risk of having preterm labor.

2. What health problems below can be caused by being born too soon?

- Breathing problems
- Hearing and seeing problems
- Eating problems
- Infant death
- All of the above

Correct answer is e, all of the above. Babies who are born too early may have serious health problems.

3. What are the signs of preterm labor?

- Your uterus may begin to cramp or contract. The contractions may be painless.
- Watery fluid is leaking from your vagina.
- You may feel like the baby is pushing down when you are cramping.
- You may have a low, dull backache or feel like you are going to start your period.
- All of the above

Correct answer is e, all of the above. Talk to your doctor about any preterm labor symptoms you have.

Here are some tips that may help prevent preterm labor:

- Go to all of your prenatal appointments.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Do not use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- Reduce a stressful lifestyle.
- Manage your health conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Seek help if you are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: *Preterm Birth*, December 2009: cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pretermbirth.htm. (Accessed June 6, 2014.)



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