

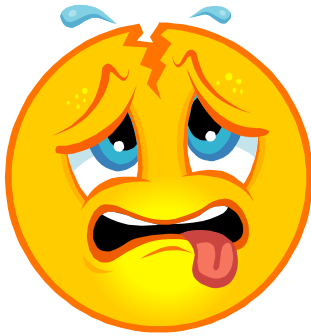





STAGES OF LABOUR & HOW TO MANAGE THEM

Stage/Phase of Labour	Feelings	What is Happening?	Useful Tips
1st stage: Early phase 8 – 16 hrs Cervix 0-4cm dilated (open) Contractions 5-20mins apart, lasting 20-40seconds	Excited, apprehensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mucous tinged with blood (Show) • Backache/thigh ache • Lower abdominal pain (like period pain) • Sometimes diarrhoea • Waters may break (Membranes rupture) • Nesting urge • Able to talk through contractions • Contractions gradually get longer, stronger & closer together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep eating & drinking (small amounts of ten) • Contact support team & call the hospital once having regular contractions • Time your contractions (from start of one to start of the next) • Move around, keep busy but don't over do it • Rest if you need to. If night-time try to get some sleep • Empty your bladder frequently
1st stage: Active phase 3-5 hrs Cervix 4-8cms dilated Contractions 3-7 mins apart, lasting 50-60 seconds	Becoming weary, restless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractions, strong and regular • Intense, lower abdominal pain • Backache/thigh ache may continue • Totally focused on labour • Dependent upon support people • Likely to feel the need to move around during contractions • Blood tinged mucous • Waters may break 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate on breathing & relaxation • Focus on one contraction at a time • Use diversion techniques – whatever feels good • Try a hot shower/bath or use hot packs • Change positions • Rest between contractions • Keep your fluids up & eat if hungry. Suck on lollies • Keep your bladder empty

<p>1st stage: Transition ½ - 2 hours</p> <p>Cervix 8-10cms dilated</p> <p>Contractions 2-3 mins apart, lasting 60-80 seconds</p>	<p>Tired, irrational</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, strong contractions • May have double peaks • May feel pressure in your bottom and urge to push • Intense tiredness • Maybe nausea and vomiting • Shaky; feelings of panic; grumpy – ‘I want to go home!’ • Bright blood loss from vagina • Waters will probably break (if not before) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try a position change • Massage your back and thighs • Try a cool washer to face and neck • Relax completely between contractions • Listen to people’s reassurance • Believe in your body – it knows what to do
<p>2nd stage: Pushing & Birth 30 mins – 2 hours</p> <p>Cervix fully dilated 10cms</p> <p>Contractions 2-5 mins apart, lasting 60-90 seconds</p>	<p>Working HARD</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractions tend to space out & become more expulsive • Strong urge to push • Pressure on bowel • Stretching, burning as baby’s head moves down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relax your mouth; relax your perineal area • Push with contractions, when the urge is there • Rest completely between contractions • Cool washer or spray to face & neck • Listen to supporters, you may need to pant through the strong urge to push to slow down the birth of the baby’s head
<p>3rd stage: Delivery of placenta 5-60 mins</p> <p>5-10 mins (Active management)</p> <p>20-60 mins (Physiological management)</p>	<p>Time to look at the Baby</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge rush of your own oxytocin • Sudden change in the size of the uterus • Placenta separates • May feel some contractions, but milder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relax • Focus on your baby • Keep baby skin to skin for as long as possible • Allow the baby to self attach to the breast

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft, full feeling in vagina as placenta passes through • Overwhelming sense of achievement • May feel absolutely exhausted 	
<p>4th stage: Parenting</p> <p>The beginning of a lifetime together</p>	<p>Working harder than you've EVER worked before</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not getting much sleep • Learning to breastfeed your baby • Feeding baby 8-12 times in 24hours • No regular pattern of feeds • Baby changes day by day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go with the flow • Rest when the baby rests • Ensure you have adequate nutrition • Restrict visitors • Ask for help when you need it • Accept help when it's offered • Continue to nurture your own relationship • Be reassured that NO-ONE is an expert the first time around