

# Outpatient induction of labour - post dates (overdue) pregnancy



Information for women and their partners

This leaflet answers some of the questions you may have about outpatient induction of labour, for women having their babies at King's College Hospital or Princess Royal University Hospital. It explains the risks, benefits and what it involves. If you have more questions, please contact a member of staff.

## Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## What is outpatient induction of labour?

We offer outpatient induction of labour for low-risk women when their labour has not started beyond 41 weeks of pregnancy.

You will be offered outpatient induction of labour if you have had a healthy, straightforward pregnancy, your pregnancy is post term and you do not have any medical conditions. We do not offer outpatient induction of labour if you are:

- over 40 years old
- over 41 weeks, 5 days pregnant
- overweight (BMI over 35)
- have had a previous caesarean
- have had more than two babies
- if your waters have already broken
- you have an IVF pregnancy.

## When is labour induced if my pregnancy is overdue?

You will be seen at the post dates clinic or by your own midwife from 40 weeks, 5 days pregnant for membrane sweeps like all post term women. During this period your midwife will assess your suitability for outpatient induction of labour. If you are suitable, your induction a date will be booked for when you are between 41 weeks and 3 days, to 41 weeks and 5 days pregnant.

## What are the benefits?

It gives you the opportunity to remain in the comfort of your own home during the initial induction process.

## What do I need to do on the day of my induction?

**If you are booked to deliver at King's College Hospital**, go to the Maternal Assessment Unit (MAU) on the fourth floor of the Golden Jubilee Wing at 9am.



**If you are booked to deliver at the Princess Royal University Hospital**, go to the Maternal Assessment Unit (MAU), level three, south wing, next to delivery suite.

Please bring your pregnancy bag and **maternity notes with you**.

You will first be seen by a midwife and your baby's heart beat will be monitored for at least 30 minutes.

You will then be seen by a senior doctor who will do a scan to confirm that your baby is head down and that there is enough fluid around your them. They will check again that your are suitable for an outpatient. The doctor will perform a vaginal examination with your consent, and insert a pessary into your vagina. Your baby's heart rate will be monitored for another 45 minutes. Providing all is well with you and your baby, you will then be able to go home to return the next morning.

Your labour may start within 24 hours of the pessary being put in. You should return to labour ward if:

- You have regular contractions (three contractions in 10 minutes)
- You have continuous abdominal pain
- You have vaginal bleeding
- Your waters break
- The pessary falls out
- You feel that the baby is not moving normally
- You are concerned about anything.

If you have any concerns about getting to and from the hospital or you do not feel happy to go home, we can arrange for you to be admitted to hospital.



If your labour does not start, you will need to return to the MAU at 9am the day after the pessary was put in. Your baby's heart rate will be monitored and the doctor and/or the midwife will do another vaginal examination, with your consent, to assess if the neck of your womb has begun to open. If the neck of your womb is ready for your waters to be broken, you will be transferred to Nightingale Birth Centre/delivery suite where further management of your labour will continue. If the neck of your womb is not ready, then you may need to stay in the hospital and have more pessaries. If this is the case, you will be admitted to the antenatal ward where your induction of labour will continue.

### What are the risks?

Induction of labour is generally safe in low risk women, but if you are concerned about anything during your stay at home when you are being induced, please do the following:

If you are booked to deliver at **King's College Hospital** please call Nightingale Birth Centre on 020 3299 3222 or come into hospital where you will be seen immediately.

If you are booked to deliver at **Princess Royal University Hospital** please call the Labour Ward on 01689 864812 or 01689 864839 or come into hospital where you will be seen immediately.

Very occasionally induction of labour can cause contractions to start more quickly or strongly than expected. Please come into hospital if you are concerned or need pain relief.



## Suggestions to making yourself comfortable at home:

- eat and drink as usual
- go for a walk, if you feel like it
- carry on as usual
- rest when you need to as sometimes induction of labour can be a slow process so you may wish to try to rest when you can
- try to do things to take your mind off wondering if labour will start
- arrange to have people with you or that are easy to contact should you need them.

## Once contractions start, there is no need to come to hospital straight away, unless:

- the contractions are very close together and very strong
- you have continuous abdominal pain
- your waters break
- you have vaginal bleeding.

## Things you can do to help cope with contractions:

- take warm baths
- walk around
- use a birthing ball
- massage
- aromatherapy
- have your birth partner with you.

If you are unsure about when to come to hospital, please ring the Nightingale Birth Centre (**Denmark Hill site**) on 020 3299 3222 or delivery suite (**Farnborough site**) on 01689 864 812 or 01689 864 839 depending upon where you have booked to deliver.



## How to find us

For information on directions, public transport and parking go to [www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk)

## Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

## Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you.

**PALS at King's College Hospital**, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **[kch-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.pals@nhs.net)**

You can also contact us by using our online form at

**[www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)**





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