

What is Labor Induction?

Labor induction happens when a pregnant woman is given medicines or other methods to start her labor before she goes into labor on her own.

For medical reasons, your doctor may choose to induce you when:

- The pregnancy has lasted more than 42 weeks
- You have high blood pressure
- Your water bag breaks early
- The water surrounding your baby is too low
- The baby is not growing well
- You have a health problems, like diabetes, that may harm you or your baby

Some women ask their doctors to induce them for non-medical reasons, such as:

- To have the baby early because she is tired of being pregnant
- To have the baby when family and friends are in town
- To plan the time the baby is born around her work schedule
- To have the baby early to plan around her doctor's busy schedule

It is not a good idea to be induced when there are no problems with the pregnancy.

Inducing labor may make a difference in your baby's health. Because it can be hard to know the date you became pregnant, inducing labor may mean that your baby is born too early. Babies that are born too early may have breathing problems and need extra care. When inducing labor does not work, you may need to have a C-section.

If your doctor suggests that you be induced, ask these questions:

- Why do I need to have my labor induced?
- What are the possible risks to me and my baby if my labor is induced?
- Can I wait to have the baby naturally without being induced?
- Are there any other options?

A pregnant woman should plan to have her baby naturally if she has no medical reason to be induced. If possible, it is best to stay pregnant for at least 39-40 weeks.