

Preparing for induction of labor: What to do before, during and after

Congratulations! You are getting close to meeting your baby.

We are thrilled you are allowing us to celebrate this time with you and your family.

Our goal is for you to have the safest experience possible as you welcome your new baby.



How to prepare for your induction

A few hours before your scheduled induction time, our nursing staff will contact you either by phone or a MyOchsner message to let you know what time to arrive.

We aim to get you in near your scheduled time, but sometimes we may need to adjust due to bed space. We do not want you to have to sit in the waiting room until a bed is available, so **please do not come in until you've been contacted by our staff.**

Our goal is to notify patients 2-3 hours prior to their scheduled induction time. For example, we notify those scheduled for a 4 pm induction by 2 pm or those scheduled for a midnight induction by 9 pm. For those scheduled for a 4 am induction, we do our best to notify you by 10 pm.

Before you come to the hospital:

- If you are scheduled for a 4 am induction, upon waking up please re-check your patient portal to make sure nothing changed overnight. **If something has changed, we will message you.**
- Prior to coming to the hospital, **eat and drink as you normally would.** Once your induction begins you will be restricted to clear fluids (popsicles, broth, water, etc.).
- Remove all jewelry other than earrings** in the ears and leave your jewelry at home.
- Take a shower **with antibacterial soap.**
- Double check** that bags for you, baby, and your support person are packed. Following a vaginal delivery, expect to stay in the hospital for 2 to 3 days.

+ **Flip the page** to learn what to expect on the day of your labor induction, and induction methods.

What to expect on the day of your induction

When you arrive at the hospital, **park in the Jena parking garage** (open 24 hours). Take the elevator up to the Labor and Delivery Floor (6th floor of the main Baptist Hospital building) and check in at the registration desk.

Once we get you into your labor and delivery room, we will start your IV. Our anesthesia team will also come introduce themselves and discuss pain management options. We will put your baby on the monitor to check the heartbeat and to see if you are having contractions on your own. Then we will check your cervix to see what method of cervical ripening and induction is best for your situation.

Induction methods

Cervical ripening balloon	Cytotec®/Misoprostol	Pitocin®/Oxytocin
<p>A small balloon that is inserted through your cervix then gently inflated.</p> <p>Using mechanical pressure over the course of a few hours, this balloon helps the cervix dilate to about 3 to 4 centimeters (cm).</p>	<p>Medication that can be placed in the vagina or taken orally to help the cervix soften and dilate.</p> <p>This medication may stimulate contractions, but it is only used to prepare your cervix for labor, not to cause regular contractions. Up to 4 doses can be given, 4 hours apart, as needed.</p>	<p>Medication given through the IV to cause your contractions to become stronger and more regular.</p>

**The cervical ripening balloon is sometimes used at the same time as either Cytotec or Pitocin.*

If upon arrival your cervix is already 3-4 cm dilated, we may start with Pitocin. If your cervix is not yet very dilated and effaced (thinned) then we will likely begin with either Cytotec, the cervical ripening balloon, or a combination of methods.

Inducing labor **takes time**

For patients who have never had a vaginal delivery, an induction may take 18-24 hours or longer. This is normal and does not mean anything is wrong. If you and your baby are doing well medically, it is fine to allow your induction to continue.

The slowest part of an induction is getting your cervix dilated to 6 cm. Once you are receiving Pitocin and your membranes are ruptured, we typically allow at least 12, and up to 18-24 hours, for your cervix to dilate to 6 cm.

After reaching 6 cm, your cervix should dilate about 1-2 cm per hour. We will be watching your and your baby's status closely throughout the process. And we will discuss all this information with you as labor progresses.

Working together for you and your baby

+ We have an entire team of OBGYNs, anesthesiologists and nurses who are here to ensure the health and safety of you and your baby. **Even if your doctor is not physically present** the entire time, rest assured that the team is in constant communication and will be working together for you.

+ If you have questions at any point please let us know! Our hope is to give you and your new baby the best possible experience during this exciting time.



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