



Preterm Labor

Labor that begins before 37 weeks is considered preterm. It occurs more frequently in women with medical health problems such as kidney or heart disease, twin pregnancy, uterine anomalies such as fibroids or an incompetent cervix, previous history of preterm labor, delivery within the last year and age of pregnancy younger than 18 or older than 40. Symptoms of preterm labor include regular uterine contractions that get longer, stronger and closer together. Braxton-Hicks contractions are not regular and are not usually strong. Call if you have more than 5 regular contractions per hour, have abdominal cramps, pain or pressure, bleeding or think you may have ruptured the membranes. If you are unsure if you are having Braxton-Hicks contractions or preterm labor, go home and rest and drink lots of fluid. If your contractions persist at 5 per hour and are regular, call the office to be seen.