



York Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Going home when your waters have broken

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, contact Triage
Tel: 01904 725924

Maternity Services

York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The York Hospital
Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE
Tel: 01904 631313

Scarborough Hospital
Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL
Tel: 01723 368111

Caring with pride

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Introduction

It has been confirmed that your waters have broken. This is considered a normal event from 37 weeks of pregnancy. Around 60% of women will start to have contractions and start labour naturally within 24 hours of their waters breaking.

You may however not have regular contractions and go into labour after your waters have broken and it would then be recommended that your labour is induced, to minimise the risk of infection to yourself and your baby.

Studies show that the chance of developing an infection is low if the baby is delivered within four days of your waters breaking. At York and Scarborough Hospitals induction of labour can be offered immediately or as soon as labour ward are able to facilitate or from 18 – 24 hours after your waters have broken. This is because it may take a few days for labour to establish from beginning the induction process. This will be discussed with you once we have confirmed your waters have broken.

Your baby will be closely monitored in labour and following the birth if your waters have been broken for longer than 24 hours. This is to monitor for any signs of infection and for this it would be recommended that you and your baby remain in hospital for 24 hours following the birth.

What happens next?

It is safe for you to go home after your waters have broken, to wait for your labour to start.

You may find that you are not at home for a long time before you start contracting regularly and need to return to the hospital. Or you may remain at home until you have agreed with your midwife to return to the hospital for your labour to be induced.

Your midwife may advise you to remain and mobilise around the hospital if you are already having regular contractions.

What do I need to do at home?

- Monitor the colour of your waters. Your waters should be clear/pink coloured.
- Monitor your temperature every 4 hours whilst you are awake. Your midwife will give you some thermometers to take home.
- Monitor your baby's movements. Your baby should continue to move as normal once your waters have broken and when you are having contractions.
- You can eat and drink as normal. It is really important that you drink plenty to remain hydrated.
- You can have a bath or shower with plain water. Do not add any bubble bath or oils to the water.
- Avoid sexual intercourse.
- Remain as active as possible; this will encourage your contractions to start.

When do I need to contact the hospital?

- When you are having regular, painful contractions.
- If your waters change colour. Your waters should be clear/pink coloured. Contact the hospital if your waters are green or brown coloured, or if you are bleeding.
- If your waters have an unpleasant smell.
- If your temperature is above 37.5°C.
- If you feel unwell.
- If you are worried about your baby's movements.
- If you have constant severe abdominal pain.
- If you have any other concerns or questions.

Contact numbers

If you are contracting us regularly or have any concerns contact:

York: 01904 725924

Scarborough: 01723 342124

To arrange to come in for your induction of labour:

York Antenatal Ward: 01904 726003

Scarborough Labour Ward: 01723 342124

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:
Maternity Services Patient Information Group,
c/o Patient Leaflet Team, Healthcare Governance,
98 Union Terrace, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road,
York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 721045 or 725230 or
email us at patient.information2@york.nhs.uk.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email pals@york.nhs.uk.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

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01904 725566

email: access@york.nhs.uk



Braille



Audio e.g.
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Electronic

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