



Patient Information Sheet

TOP TIPS FOR AN INDUCTION OF LABOUR

Introduction

This information will provide you with some top tips for when you are admitted for an Induction of Labour (IOL).

If you have any questions after reading the leaflet, please speak to one of the midwifery team.

What is an Induction of Labour (IOL)?

- An induced labour is one that is started artificially rather than going into labour naturally.
- It is common for labour to be induced if your baby is overdue or there are any risks to you or your baby's health. Ask your midwife for our information leaflet on Induction of Labour.
- Induction is often a lengthy process. If appropriate, it may be more beneficial to begin any paternity leave once baby has arrived or labour is properly established.
- Your IOL date will be given to you depending on the reason for it being requested. This is usually within a time range e.g. 39 weeks up until 40 weeks of pregnancy.

Day of your induction

- You will receive a call inviting you to come in. If we need to delay your induction for any reason, you will receive a call from us to update you.
- We will also enquire about you and your baby's wellbeing. If necessary, an appointment can be arranged to be checked over whilst waiting to come in to start the induction process.
- **If you have not been contacted by 5pm, please contact the Blossom Suite 01782 672200.**
- The aim is to admit you before 10:00am however this can be anytime of the day depending on the activity in the unit.

After being admitted

It is important to remember that this is just a guide as an induction of labour is an individual experience and journey. Prepare for the unexpected. All pregnancies, labour and births are different.

- When admitted, a midwife will carry out a full antenatal examination including monitoring your baby's heartbeat (approximately 30 mins).
- There are different methods of induction used depending on how dilated (open) your cervix is. The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus (womb) that connects the uterus to the vagina (birth canal).
- The cervix dilates (widens) during labour to allow your baby to be born. Therefore, you will be offered a vaginal examination, so the midwife knows what the best way is to start your induction of labour.
- You may need vaginal hormonal tablets or non-hormonal induction of labour, or your waters breaking. Your midwife will discuss everything with you and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions.
- Vaginal tablets can take between 6 and 24 hours to soften and open your cervix. It is not meant to be a fast process.
- When/if your waters can be broken, you will be transferred from the Blossom Suite to Delivery Suite for this and a hormone drip will be started. This can be a lengthy process but often you will have your baby within 24 hours of starting the drip.



The Blossom Suite

Inductions of labour usually start on The Blossom Suite, located in the Midwifery Birth Centre at Royal Stoke University Hospital.

When you are ready to have your waters broken, you will then be transferred to Delivery Suite to continue the induction process.

For more details on an induction of labour process, please scan the QR code to watch a short video.



Top Tips

Food & Drink

- Food, drinks and snacks are available on the Blossom Suite for those admitted for induction of labour.
- You may wish to bring additional supplies with you of your favourite snacks or food, and lots of them, as an induction can be a long process.
- Energy rich foods will help give you the energy you need for induction and labour; such as bananas, nut butter sandwiches, wholegrain crackers along with energy drinks and dextrose tablets.
- Food cannot be reheated in the unit.

Fans

- Bring with you your own hand-held fan, neck or folding fan which will help make you feel more comfortable.
- Alternatively, the Blossom Suite has a small supply of fans for use.

Chargers

Please remember to bring your chargers with you for your phone and other electronic devices.

TENS machines

- Make sure you pack your TENS machine if you have one in your hospital bag.
- TENS can stimulate your body to produce more endorphins (your body's natural painkillers).
- TENS can reduce the number of pain signals sent to the brain by the spinal cord.

Flannels

Pop some flannels in your hospital bag, so you can regularly run them under cold water. They can help to keep you more comfortable.

Ice, Ice, baby!

Although ice isn't available in the Maternity Centre, you can bring a thermos of ice from home that you can add to cold drinks or to suck on.

Comfort

It is important that you are as comfortable as possible, so bring along anything that will help with this such as:

- Your own pillows and/or blanket from home as these may be more comfortable. You will however be provided with these by the unit.
- Your comfiest clothes.

Accept help

Be open minded to suggestions and possibilities. Some inductions can be a long/tiring process so accept help and painkillers when offered them. Ask staff for help if needed and never feel embarrassed.

Fun things to do

Please feel free to bring items such as books, magazines, cards, crosswords, sudoku, jigsaw puzzles, download films, relaxation aids, music, headphones for you/your partner.

Chilled vibes

- Much easier said than done! Create a music playlist to listen to or your favourite podcast.
- Pack some massage oils and practice some mindfulness techniques, hypnotherapy or affirmation cards.

Portable speakers and/or earphones

Connect to a streaming platform and watch your favourite TV show, a film or listen to music or a podcast.

Sense of humour

- Also, much easier to say than do, but it can really help!
- Have a soak in the bath as they can be a form of pain relief and bring along your favourite relaxing bubble bath.

Get moving

- You will be actively encouraged to move during your induction. This could be walking around the ward/unit/hospital or by using aids, such as the birthing balls.
- If your situation allows, you can also leave the ward to walk around outside or go across to the canteen or food outlets to get something to eat and drink.
- Mobilising has been proven to help get your baby into an optimal position for labour and helps the cervix to open.

View our frequently asked questions video
via the QR Code



Contact details

Blossom Suite/Midwife Birth Centre 01782 672200

Leaflet co-produced by University Hospitals of North Midlands and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Maternity and Neonatal Voices. Tips created from previous local women/ birthing people and their families feedback about their birth induction.

