

## PRE-TERM LABOUR RUPTURE OF MEMBRANES (PROM)



If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter.

From home contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 13 1450.

Services are provided free of charge. Ask staff if this information is available in your preferred language.

### EASTERN HEALTH MATERNITY SERVICE

#### When your waters break before labour starts at the end of pregnancy

During pregnancy, your growing baby is supported in the womb by a sac of water held within two membranes. These waters are important for the growth and development of your baby during pregnancy and the membranes act as a barrier to prevent bacteria entering the womb. In some cases, the sac of waters breaks ahead of contractions starting.

Waters breaking is a sign that your labour may start soon. 6 out of 10 women whose waters break before labour starts will go into labour naturally within 24 hours, and 9 out of 10 women whose waters break before labour starts will give birth to their baby within 48 hours.

When labour does not start within 24 hours of the waters breaking it is usually appropriate to consider a plan to be made to start your labour artificially by 'induction of labour'. In some cases, it is appropriate to commence induction of labour earlier than 24 hours, particularly if Group B Streptococcus has been detected earlier in the pregnancy.

#### Risks to you and the baby

When waters break ahead of labour starting there is a risk of infection to you and/or your baby which needs to be managed by you and your maternity unit. The risk of infection is not high, but sometimes it will be necessary to observe the health of your baby and treat your baby once he/she is born. The risk of serious neonatal infection following breaking your waters in the last 3 weeks of pregnancy increases slightly the longer the time between the waters breaking and the birth of the baby. The estimated risk is 1 in 100 (rather than 1 in 200 for women with intact waters)

#### It is important to watch for any signs of infection when you go home. To do this, you need to:

- Note the colour of the fluid/ loss coming out of your vagina each time you go to the toilet or change your pad
- Check your temperature every 4 hours using a reliable thermometer. You are asked to record the temperatures on the sheet overleaf and bring it to the maternity unit with you.
- Pay attention to your baby's movements, and contacting the maternity unit if movements are reduced
- If you were given antibiotics, take them as prescribed until all the tablets are gone.
- Attend the hospital every 24 hours for review by the maternity team

#### Please phone birth suite for advice if any of the following things happen:

**You feel unwell or your temperature goes above 37.2°C**

**The colour of the fluid or loss coming out of the vagina is green tinged, yellow or red**

**The fluid or loss coming out of the vagina smells offensive**

**Your baby does not move as much as it has been moving**

**Your belly or back becomes sore or tender, or you start to have pains or contractions**

**You have any other concerns**

