Elective induction after 39 weeks

There may be many reasons why a woman wants to discuss elective induction of labor with her healthcare provider. Elective induction of labor is not always the best choice for your baby. Risk can be associated to inducing labor before 39 weeks (one week before a woman’s due date) or before a mother’s cervix is ready. Because of these risks, The Family Place will not schedule elective inductions for women less than 39 weeks of pregnancy.

What are the risks of elective induction of labor?

If labor is induced before 39 weeks, the baby:

- Is two to three times more likely to be admitted to the nursery for additional care;
- May have trouble breathing;
- May have trouble feeding;
- May have trouble maintaining his or her temperature;
- May not be healthy enough to be discharged the same day as you.

If labor is induced when the cervix is not ready, a mother:

- Is likely to have a longer labor, sometimes two days or more;
- May even have go home for a few days of rest before continuing;
- Is two times (or more) more likely to have a Cesarean birth than compared to mothers who begin labor naturally.

Your induction has been scheduled for

Date:__________  Time:__________

Please call The Family Place at

603) 227-7000, ext. 4110

on:__________ at:__________
to confirm that we can accommodate you.
**What is induction of labor?**
Labor induction means that the birth process is started by artificial methods, rather than waiting for labor to begin naturally. Inducing labor can be done using medications as well as devices that help to open the lower part of the uterus, known as the cervix. Inducing labor comes with added risks and should be discussed carefully with your obstetric provider.

**Why might labor induction be recommended?**
Labor induction may be recommended by your healthcare provider for the following medical reasons:
- Your pregnancy has gone one to two weeks past the expected due date.
- You have high blood pressure.
- An infection is suspected.
- You have diabetes.
- You or your baby has a chronic health condition.

**How is labor induced?**
Labor can be induced in a number of ways. You and your healthcare provider will decide which is best for each situation. Sometimes the combination of the following may be used:
- An intravenous (IV) medication (Pitocin) may be used. Pitocin is a laboratory-made version of oxytocin, the hormone that is responsible for, among other things, labor contractions.
- A medication called Cervidil® may be placed in your vagina. This helps thin and soften the opening of the cervix to prepare for further induction of labor.
- A medication called misoprostol may be given either orally or in the vagina to thin and soften the opening of the cervix. It may also produce contractions and lead to labor.

**What are some suggestions to help a mother cope during the last few weeks of pregnancy?**
Discomfort during the last few weeks of pregnancy is quite normal. As the baby grows and your body changes, new aches and pains may occur. Discomfort can be managed by:
- Resting, soaking in a warm tub, and/or a massage;
- Getting support from your loved ones, talking about concerns and frustrations;
- Scheduling fun activities with friends or a night out with someone special.

**Did you know?**
Adrenaline (the hormone that causes our heart to race when we are frightened) can interfere with your body’s use of oxytocin (the hormone that causes labor contractions). It may actually take longer to give birth if you feel anxious or pressure from yourself or others! The more you feel relaxed, supported and loved, the easier it may be for your body to go into labor on its own.

The position of your baby in your pelvis can make a big difference in a comfortable, natural birth. To assist your baby getting into an optimal position for birth begin the following four to six weeks before your due date:
- Rest or lay on one side or another and avoid laying on your back.

- Be physically active by taking walks or crawling around on hands and knees (this actually relieves back pressure).
- Sit up straight, with knees below your belly or with your belly hanging between your knees. This gives your baby more room to wiggle into the best position possible for birth.
- When riding in a car put a small pillow or rolled up towel against the small of your back to create a slight arch.

**If you are having your labor induced:**
The Family Place at Concord Hospital is committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment for your baby’s birth. Because labor and birth can be unpredictable, there may be times when we need to change the time or day of your scheduled induction of labor to make sure there is a patient room available, and that you will have a nurse committed to giving you her undivided attention.

To guarantee this, we ask you to call The Family Place at (603) 225-2711, extension 4110, to confirm your induction of labor. If there is a need to reschedule your induction, your healthcare provider will be involved in the decision.

**Helpful tips for when you arrive for induction of labor**
Induction of labor may take several days. Bring DVDs, playing cards and reading materials to pass the time while being induced and in the early stages of labor. Try to rest or sleep. You may be offered a sleeping pill to do so. Encourage family and friends to allow you to rest or sleep in the early stages of labor.