

Stages of Labor

Stage 1 - Labor

Pre-labor

You may feel contractions at this time. Your cervix will be thick and firm.

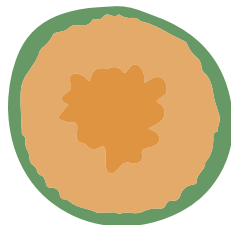
Early Labor

Your cervix will get soft and start to open. Contractions will get closer. Eating, drinking, and steady breathing can help.

Active Labor

Your cervix will keep opening and your contractions will get longer and stronger. Try steady breathing and walking around.

cervix will open from 1 to up to 10 cm during this time



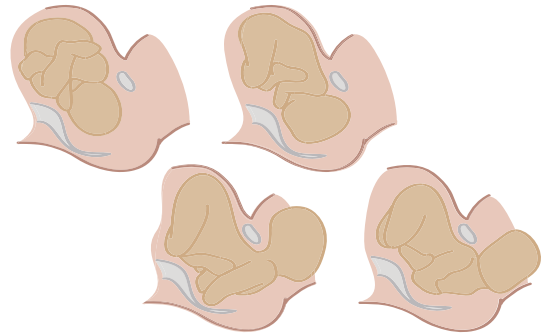
Transition

Your cervix will open and your baby's head will move from your uterus to your vagina. You might feel the "urge to push." Keep breathing.

Stage 2 - Pushing

Resting

You might have a "pause" in your labor. This is a good time for rest and support.



Descent

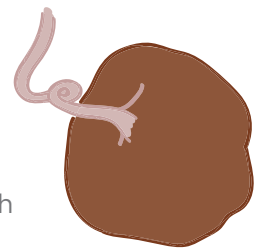
Your contractions and the "urge to push" will start again. Your baby's head will be through the birth canal and your doctor will be able to see it.

Birth

The best positions for pushing are semi-sitting, lying on your side, on your hands and knees, or squatting.

Placenta

After your baby is born, you will still feel contractions. You will push out the placenta about 10 minutes to 1 hour after your baby is born.



Stage 3 - Postpartum

Right after birth is a great time to bond with your baby. Skin-to-skin contact is a great way to get close and it helps get breastfeeding started too. If your baby is healthy, the doctors can do all of the needed tests right there next to you.

