

## Parent Education Handy Tips

### Hospital Contact Numbers

St. John's, Livingston: 01506 523000  
Triage and Assessment NRIE: 0131 242 2657

### SIGNS OF LABOUR

1. Show – Mucousy discharge, may be blood stained- No need to go in or call midwife.
2. Waters “going” either a gush of fluid or small trickle, should be clear/straw coloured. You should contact midwife if you suspect waters have gone.
3. Crampy pains begin like period pains either in back or low down in front.

If you have any concerns at all, call the hospital in case you need to be seen, often with first babies, you may be seen then allowed home again for a while.

During the day it may be possible to be seen at your Health Centre, at night you will have to go to the Triage and Assessment Area at Little France or St John's to be seen, please bear in mind travelling time, traffic, etc.

### What to take with you

- Your notes and labour bag
- Snacks, drinks (better with diluting juice/ water).
- Partners – something cool and comfortable, remember the Labour Suite is very warm, shorts and T-shirts are good.
- Drinks and snacks for your partner .
- Parking is free at St Johns and you can pay by cash or card at the Royal.
- Mobiles cannot be used inside the labour rooms. You might want to have a group txt list set up or to arrange someone to cascade news .
- Books, magazines etc.
- CD /music . CD players are available but not guaranteed, bring your own if you want, or MP3 ? Must be battery operated, not allowed to plug anything in at St Johns.
- She might want a couple of extra pillows for comfort
- Massage oil ?
- Camera
- Baby – clothes, baby grows, vests, a hat, nappies, cotton wool

Leave valuables at home.

### What your partner can do to help – some suggestions

- Stay calm (or at least look calm !!)
- Fuel in Car (don't leave till morning to refuel)

- Know the route ! –it is worth knowing how to get to both hospitals in Lothian in case one is full
- Distraction – talking, going for a walk
- Reassuring/ keeping morale up – can be difficult if labour is lengthy but try to keep a focus on the baby
- Support her with different positions
- Massage
- Run a bath
- Snacks and drinks – if her energy levels go down, labour may slow. Non-fizzy drinks are best
- Get her to hospital calmly and safely if that is where you are having your baby. Go when she is ready and phone for advice if you need to feel reassured about staying at home as long as possible .
- Encourage her to breath slowly and calmly. It might help to do it with her. Eye contact is also good
- Remind her to empty bladder – might seem odd but she will be focussed on other things !
- Mop her brow/neck with a flannel to help keep her cool
- Keep questions and comments open e.g. how do you feel you are doing /coping etc? *instead* of ‘do you want to try Entonox/morphine etc?’
- Sometimes it’s about doing nothing –just letting her ‘be’ in labour. She might not want to chat or to be touched, she knows you are there and that will mean a lot
- Ask questions/repeat what is said, yours is the voice that she is likely to focus in on.
- For your own information and reassurance - BRAN, Benefits(what are the benefits of... ) Risks(what are the risks of..) Alternatives (are there alternatives?) Now/Nothing (what happens if we do nothing/ do we need to decide now?)
- Communicating with relatives – if they know you are in labour, of course they are concerned and will want to know what is happening . It might be worth phoning a nominated person every few hours to update.
- Have a break when you need to , get a breath of fresh air, eat etc. You’ll be more help to her if she does not have to worry about you.

After your baby is born, encourage her to have skin to skin, if she is not up to it, then get cuddling in with your baby.

Remember to look at, talk to and soothe your baby, (its hard not to, they’re amazing!!) See if he/she can copy you. Give time to respond.

### Pain relief – brief

TENS – Best results if started early. Available for hire from Mama Tens and Boots and most big chemists. If buying one second hand. Make sure its an obstetric TENS

GYM BALL – good for relaxing on in the early stages, allows free movement of back and pelvis. Available on labour ward . Ask if there's not one in the room

PARACETAMOL – totally safe to take during pregnancy and early labour. Take according to instructions.

GAS & AIR – Entonox, short acting gas, mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide, breathed through a mouthpiece, self controlled and short acting, available in the hospital at any point. Can also use in water.

(DIA) MORPHINE – Opiate injection, given usually with an anti-sickness injection, strong painkiller, helps relaxation and eases pain. Can be given at any time during labour.

WATER – baths, showers can be taken at any time and help relaxation. Remember labour ward has pools, if you want to use one, say earlier rather than later, they take a while to fill! Each room in the birth centre has a pool. There are 3 pools available at St. Johns.

EPIDURAL – set up by anaesthetist, local anaesthetic is administered through a very fine tube in back. Gives total pain relief, you will be unable to walk about with an epidural though. Available 24 hours a day.

Also

Jack and Jill markets – for buying and selling nearly new equipment. Best not to buy a second hand car seat unless you know its full history. [www.jackandjillmarket.co.uk/](http://www.jackandjillmarket.co.uk/)

Visiting

Visitors will NOT be allowed into the Labour Suite before you have the baby, only partners. After you have had your baby partners can stay whilst on labour ward, please try to keep visitors and phone calls to a minimum, good idea to nominate one person from family to phone, they can then pass on news.

Visiting times

2.30-4 and 7-8

Partners 10-12.30 and 2.30-9

When going home, remember you MUST have a proper car seat for your baby. Good idea to know how it fits before you are standing at the car in the rain !

I think that's it guys, but in case I have forgotten something, just email me

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