



Going home with a balloon catheter

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

After speaking to your doctor or midwife, it was decided to use a balloon catheter to help prepare your cervix for delivery. This document will give you more information about the procedure.

You will be induced. But right now, your cervix is not ready. We need to prepare it first (help it to ripen) before we can induce labour. This step is important because it increases your chances of a smooth delivery.

How does the balloon catheter help to ripen the cervix (opening of the uterus)?

The balloon catheter is a small, soft silicone tube that is gently inserted into the cervix. Once in place, it is filled with a small amount of water to form a little balloon. This balloon presses against the cervix and helps your body to produce prostaglandins, natural hormones that prepare the cervix for delivery.

This causes the cervix to **thin, soften, and begin to open up (dilate)**. The balloon catheter can be left in place for up to **24 hours**. It is inserted at the hospital or birthing centre. Before you go back home with the balloon catheter in place, your care team will make sure you and your baby are doing well.



What to expect after the balloon catheter is inserted?

You may feel some effects after the balloon catheter is inserted:

- Cramping in the lower abdomen or pressure in the vagina or rectum;
- Light, bright-red or brown bleeding (similar to spotting);
- Relatively painful contractions, similar to period cramps.

These are signs that your body is starting to prepare for delivery. If you're worried or if the pain becomes too intense, do not hesitate to contact your care team.

When to call the nurse or midwife?

- You have bright-red bleeding that won't stop;
- You have very strong pain that doesn't improve despite taking a bath, changing position, or taking acetaminophen;
- You have regular, painful contractions:
 - every five minutes or less for one hour (if you have given birth before);
 - every five minutes or less for two hours (if this is your first baby);
- Your water breaks or there is fluid leaking from your vagina;
- Your baby is moving less (fewer than six movements in two hours);
- You have a fever (38 °C or higher by mouth);
- You have concerns or questions.



How to reach us

**Birth pavilion,
Hôpital Anna-Laberge**
450-699-2463

**Mother-child centre,
Hôpital du Suroît**
450-371-9920, ext. 2148

**Services de sage-femme
de la Vallée (midwifery
services de la Vallée)**
Call your midwife on her mobile
phone or the on-duty phone:
450-377-7303, ext. 2

Some additional information

- **When you go to the bathroom**, gently pat yourself dry so you don't accidentally pull out the catheter.
- **Continue your usual activities at home.** You can walk, eat normally, go to the bathroom, and take a bath or shower. You should also take time to rest.
- If the catheter falls out, do not reinsert it. Write down the time it fell out. Call your midwife or the nurses if you have any concerns.
- You will be given **your next follow-up appointment** when the balloon catheter is inserted, based on your health professional's assessment.



Appointment

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Notes: _____



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Centre intégré
de santé
et de services sociaux
de la Montérégie-Ouest

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