

When your waters break before 37 weeks of pregnancy...

Unfortunately, your waters have broken and you are less than 37 weeks pregnant. This is a condition called preterm (premature) rupture of membranes. This means that the protective sac of fluid around your baby has come away. This occurs in approximately 3% of pregnancies.

It is unclear why this happens to some pregnancies and not others. Preterm rupture of membranes carries a risk of infection and premature labour. The water will usually continue to come away until your baby is born.

As soon as we have confirmed that your waters have broken, we recommend starting a course of antibiotic tablets for 10 days. You may be offered 2 steroid injections 12-24 hours apart to help mature your baby's lungs and reduce other risks of a premature baby. You will likely have had blood tests and vaginal swab performed in the Maternity Assessment Unit to look for indications of infection.

We recommend an initial 48 hour stay in hospital where we can complete regular observations on yourself and your baby. While you are on the ward, we will arrange for you to speak to doctors or nurses from the neonatal unit, so they can explain what to expect when your baby is born.

If you do not go into labour during the first 48 hours and you are not showing signs of infection, you may go home with precautions.

It is very important to minimise your risk of infection, so please ensure that you do the following:

- Change your sanitary towel frequently, at least every 4 hours during the day whether it is wet or not.
- Do not use tampons.
- If you have a bath do not add anything to it e.g. oils, foam, bubbles or to put talc, deodorant or perfume on your genital area.
- Do not go swimming.
- Do not have sex.

While you are at home, it is important that you check your temperature once a day, monitor the colour and smell of the water, and pay close attention to your baby's movements. You can record these on your **My Pregnancy Notes** app. If you have any issues with your app, a paper chart is included below.

If you do not have a thermometer at home, the ward midwife will provide you with some tempaDOT© single use disposable thermometers.

We will arrange weekly appointments for you to attend the Antenatal Day Unit (ANDU). At ANDU, you will have blood tests and monitoring of baby's heart rate (CTG) to ensure you and your baby are well and can continue to be managed as outpatient care.

We will also arrange for you to have regular ultrasound scans to check your baby's growth and the volume of water around baby. You will be reviewed by a doctor in a Consultant led antenatal clinic following every scan.

If your baby is born before 37 weeks, your baby is more likely to have various problems (e.g. breathing problems, difficulty feeding, temperature control, jaundice). It may be safer to wait until 37 weeks before inducing your labour as long as there are no infective concerns.

However, if you go into labour naturally, we will not be able to stop your labour.

This can be an understandably stressful time. It is important to take each day as it comes

You may continue to see your community midwife once you have gone home. In addition, there is always a midwife available to take your call on the Maternity Assessment Centre if you have any questions.

Please contact the Maternity Assessment Centre (01422 224392) if you are concerned in any way about your pregnancy or you experience any of the following symptoms:

- You feel unwell or hot and feverish or temperature below or above 36.0 and 37.4
- The colour of the water coming away changes to green, brown, pink or red.
- The smell of the water coming away changes.
- If you experience any bleeding.
- The pattern of your baby's movements change.
- If you think your labour has started or you experience pain that is stronger or different to normal.

Example on how to complete the Observation chart

Date	Water Colour (clear, green, brown, pink, red)	Water smell (normal / smelly)	Temperature	Baby's Movements
	Clear	Normal	36.4	Normal
	Pink	Smelly	37.4	Reduced

If you wish to use the paper sheet instead of the app, please use the following page.

Date	Water Colour	Water smell	Temperature	Movements

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Maternity Assessment Centre

Telephone: 01422 224392

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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