



When to Contact Your Midwives in Labor

When to call your midwife in labor can feel like a difficult dance. Below are some guidelines to follow to help you decide when it's time to page. If at any point what you're experiencing doesn't match these guidelines but you are concerned or wanting the input of your midwife, please don't hesitate to reach out. It is recommended to download a contraction timer app on you or your partner's phone as this can be an easy and simple way to time contractions. In general more contact is better than less contact and earlier contact better than later contact. The distance you live from Port Townsend should also be factored in. ****Note, there is a separate handout that covers reasons outside of labor to contact your midwife immediately****

Labor reasons I want you to reach out right away, regardless of time of day or night:

- Any signs of labor prior to 37 weeks gestation
- Any hints that maybe your water bag has released. This can sometimes be obvious with a big dramatic splash and other times a small trickle that can leave you wondering if it was your amniotic sac or if you've lost a bit of bladder control. I can help you figure this out, please page. We will want to know what color the fluid is, so if you can catch it on something light colored, this is helpful.
- Regular contractions that have a pattern of "511". 5- Contractions that are 5 minutes apart (from the beginning of 1 contraction to the beginning of the next), 1- Lasting 1 minute (from beginning to end of 1 contraction), 1- This contraction frequency and duration for the last.
- Sudden decreased fetal movement.

Reasons you may consider reaching out through Maternity Neighborhood messaging or voicemail as an early head's up:

- Regular contractions with increasing intensity, frequency or duration. If it's not 511- reaching out in this less urgent way is helpful to get a birth assistant lined up and to get other work and/or family stuff in order so we can both be ready when it's time for us to come.
- Any "soft signs" of impending labor such as loss of mucous plug (especially if it is blood tinged), a spot of blood on toilet paper when wiping or in underwear (which we call bloody show) or loose stools. Any of these combined with each other or with even mild cramping/contractions are more significant.

In early labor, there is often quite a bit of contact back and forth between us. This is intended to help me stay informed with what is happening, offer recommendations/suggestions as needed or desired and to help best assess when it is time for your team to join you at your labor. It is not an exact science and we make the best decision we can. If at any point, you are ready for one or both of us to come and check-in in-person, *please simply state this.*

To contact your midwife urgently please "double call" 360.385.6667 two times back to back and leave a message. If you have not heard back from me within 10 minutes please repeat this process.