

Symptoms of Preterm Labor: Prenatal Care Algorithm

All pregnant women around 20 weeks of gestation.

Educate about the significance of prematurity and low birth weight

Educate about symptoms of preterm labor

- * Pelvic pressure (feels like the baby is pushing down)
- * Low, dull backache
- * Menstrual-like cramps
- * Changes or increase in vaginal discharge
- * Uterine contractions (hardness of the uterus which occurs at least every 10 minutes which may be painless)
- * Intestinal cramping, with or without diarrhea

Teach how to palpate for contractions

Teach when and where to call with symptoms

Patient calls with symptoms

EGA < 37 weeks

YES

NO

Assess duration of symptoms

Instruct patient regarding normal labor procedures

> 1 hour

< 1 hour

Activity status - active

Activity status - inactive

Instruct patient to drink 2-3 glasses of water or juice; lie down in left lateral position for one hour; if symptoms do not subside or if they recur, patient should call back

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Encourage patient to be seen