

Going Home with a Balloon Catheter Mechanical Cervical Ripening Method

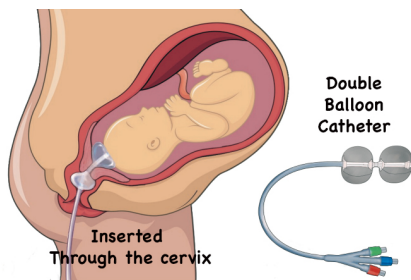


This information sheet is intended for patients going home with a balloon catheter. It offers instructions on what to expect and what to do.

Your cervix is not ready for labour yet (closed and thick cervix). The doctor decides to send you home with a balloon catheter.

How does it work?

A catheter is a soft thin tube that is inserted into your cervix by the doctor. Then a small balloon (or two) at the end of the catheter is filled with water. The inflated balloon helps to stretch your cervix open and causes a local release of prostaglandins. Prostaglandins soften and thin your cervix. The catheter will be left in place for up to 24 hours.



What to expect following the insertion of the balloon catheter?

- You may feel some discomfort throughout the procedure followed by menstrual-like cramps lasting few minutes to few hours
- You may have some vaginal spotting or pink discharge.
- You may feel some back pain and contractions may start few hours later
- Before going home with the catheter, the healthcare team will monitor your baby's well-being, your vital signs and discuss any concerns that you may have.
- The catheter is usually left in place for up to 24 hours
- It may fall out on its own before the predetermined time when the cervix has ripened enough. In that case, throw it in the garbage and call the hospital to let them know
- If it does not fall out before 24h, return to the hospital at the planned time for reassessment. Time to return: _____

Call the birthing centre triage if you experience any of these signs :

- The catheter falls out
- Unable to cope with the pain despite comfort measures or the use of acetaminophen (only safe pain killer during pregnancy)
- One painful contraction every 5 minutes or less for at least two hours
- Leaking amniotic fluid from your vagina or your "water breaks"
- Bright red vaginal bleeding and more than just spotting
- Fever greater than 38 degrees Celsius
- Any concerns or unsure of what to do

Cautions:

- Do not use any form of aspirin, ibuprofen or pain relief cream.
- When towelling off or after going to the bathroom, carefully pat your vagina so you don't accidentally pull out the balloon.
 - Make sure you do not tug on the balloon; tugging may cause additional cramping.
 - If it falls out, DO NOT attempt to put it back in, call the hospital. You may be asked to return to the hospital.

What can I do at home?

During this time, you may have a shower or bath, eat normally, sleep and resume your usual activities.

CONTACT

This information sheet serves as a general guide. For more information or if you have any concerns, do not hesitate to call your doctor or the triage birthing centre at **514-843-1592**.