

# Signs and symptoms of preterm labor

**Preterm labor** is labor that happens too early, **before 37 weeks** of pregnancy.

Your baby could be **born too soon** and have serious health problems.



Pregnant woman icon designed by OCHA from FlatIcon

Learn the signs and symptoms of preterm labor:

**Regular or frequent contractions** that may or may not be painful

Constant low, dull **backache**

**Belly cramps** with or without diarrhea

The feeling that your **baby is pushing down**

**Change in your vaginal discharge** or more vaginal discharge than usual

Your **water breaks**

## What you can do:

If you have even **one sign or symptom** of preterm labor, **call your health care provider** right away.



When you see your provider, she may **check your cervix** to see if you're in labor.

If you are, she may give you **treatment to help stop labor** or to **improve your baby's health** before birth.



More information: [marchofdimes.org/preterm labor](http://marchofdimes.org/preterm labor)