



# Induction of Labour at 41 weeks

## Patient information Leaflet

June 2020

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I have not had any significant problems during my pregnancy. Why am I being offered Induction of Labour?

Here at Tameside Hospital, if you have had a pregnancy with no complications, you will be offered induction of labour when you are 41 weeks pregnant. You do not have to accept this offer. There are advantages and disadvantages to inducing labour. This leaflet aims to help you to decide if and when induction is the best option for you. If you decide not to be induced at 41 weeks, the offer of induction remains open.

For women who are age 35 or older, there may be advantages to considering induction of labour at 40 weeks (or possibly at 39 weeks if you are age 40 or older). Your midwife or doctor can discuss this with you.

### **What are the factors to consider?**

There are three important factors to consider when deciding whether you would prefer induction of labour or to continue waiting for the natural onset of labour:

#### Question 1

Are there any disadvantages to me in going through the induction process?

Induction of labour is not a natural process. It can take a significant amount of time (up to three days) and it usually involves a number of internal examinations. Most/Some women report induction to be more painful than spontaneous labour.

If you need to use the hormone drip (see "Induction of Labour" leaflet") you will not be able to have your baby on the birth centre.

However, the risk of needing to have a caesarean section during labour appears to be slightly lower if pregnancy is induced at 41 weeks rather than letting the pregnancy continue.

#### Question 2

Are there any problems to my baby being born at this time?

There do not seem to be any disadvantages for the baby in being born at 41 weeks, compared to later. The chance of a baby experiencing difficulties with development is higher if a baby is born prematurely (before 37 weeks). However, the chance of a baby having developmental problems is lowest if born around 40-41 weeks. After 41 weeks, the risk of developing problems related to brain development starts to increase.

#### Question 3

Is the baby safe inside?

This is probably the hardest question to answer. Most babies will be healthy whether they are born at 40, 41 or 42 weeks. However, there is always a small risk of stillbirth at any stage in pregnancy and this risk increases as you go further past the due date.

The current NICE guideline on Induction of Labour states that the average risk of stillbirth at 40 weeks is approximately 1 in 800 pregnancies and that this risk has doubled by 42 weeks when the risk is around 1 in 400 pregnancies.

Various studies give different estimates as to the exact risk of stillbirth. A recent study published in the British Medical Journal suggested that approximately 250 women would need to have their labour induced at 41 weeks in order to prevent one stillbirth.

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Despite the difference in the exact estimates of stillbirth risk, all of the studies agree that there is a small, but growing possibility of this devastating outcome as a pregnancy goes further beyond the due date.

### **What Next?**

If you decide that you would like an induction of labour, your midwife can arrange a date for this. You will be given further information regarding what to expect on the day.

If you decide that you would not like an induction of labour, your midwife will agree any next steps with you. This may include seeing a doctor and/or arranging an ultrasound scan.

### **References**

Cochrane Database Systematic Review. 2012.

Induction of labour for improving birth outcomes for women at or beyond term. Gülmezoglu et al.

Induction of labour at 41 weeks versus expectant management and induction of labour at 42 weeks

(SWEdish Post-term Induction Study, SWEPIS): BMJ 2019 Wennerholm et al.

NICE Guideline 70: Inducing labour. 2008 (revised 2017). [nice.org.uk/guidance/cg70](http://nice.org.uk/guidance/cg70)

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space below to remind you

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

If you require an interpreter, please ask an appropriate person to contact our central booking office between Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm on 0161 922 6991 to arrange this for you.

語言翻譯及病者支持服務 (LIPS):

如果閣下需要翻譯員在您的預約當日幫助您的話 請找一名合適的家庭成員 0161 922 6991 聯絡本中央預約辦事處來您您安排 我們的辦公時間是星期一至星期五 上午 8 時至下午 5 時

**Językowo Tłumaczeniowa Usługa Pomocy dla Pacjenta (Language, Interpretation and Patient Support Service LIPS):**

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy tłumacza w trakcie swojej wizyty, proszę poprosić odpowiedniego członka rodziny o skontaktowanie się z Centralnym Biurem Zamówień (Central Booking Office), w celu zorganizowania tłumacza pomiędzy poniedziałkiem a piątkiem w godzinach od 08:00 - 17:00 pod numerem 0161 922 6991.

لینگویج، انٹرنپریٹیشن اینڈپیشنٹ سپورٹ سروس (Lips)

اگر آپ کو اپنی اپائنمنٹ کے لئے مترجم کی مدد کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ مہربانی اپنے خاندان کے کسی موزوں فرد سے کہیں کہ وہ ہمارے سنٹرل بنگ آفس سے پیر سے جمعہ 8.00 بجے صبح سے 5.00 بجے شام کے دوران 0161 922 6991 پر فون کر کے اس کا بندوبست کریں۔

Document control information

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