FREE PRINTABLE · FOR PARTNERS

Partner's labor cheat sheet

Who to call, what to watch for, and how to help

You know her best. This page covers the rest: who to call, what to watch for, and how to help.

Fill in the blanks together at a prenatal visit, then keep it in the hospital bag or on the fridge.

NUMBERS TO HAVE READY

Her care team first

Her OB: office and after hours

Hospital triage or labor and delivery

MFM office

Hospital address and the entrance to use at night

Our doula

Allison: text or call (478) 974-3434

Who is covering pets and home

WHAT HER TEAM TOLD US

Write it in their words

When to call

When to come in

Call first, or go straight in?

Anything special for her condition

CALL HER CARE TEAM RIGHT AWAY

And follow their instructions

- You think labor has started, or you're not sure[1]
- Her water breaks[1]
- She is bleeding heavily[1]
- She has constant, severe pain with no break between contractions[1]
- The baby is moving less, or the pattern of movement changes[1,4]
- She has a headache that won't go away, sees spots or notices changes in her vision[2]
- She has pain in her upper belly or shoulder, nausea and vomiting, swelling of her face or hands, or trouble breathing[2]

If it ever feels like an emergency, call 911.

IN LABOR

You're on comfort

- [ ] Counter-pressure on her lower back during contractions
- [ ] Ice chips or sips of water, if her team says yes
- [ ] Remind her of the words she practiced
- [ ] Help her change positions. If she's monitored, ask the nurse what's possible
- [ ] A cool cloth, lip balm and a hair tie
- [ ] Keep the room how she likes it: the lights, the music, who's in it
- [ ] Write down what the nurses and doctors tell you
- [ ] Eat, drink and charge your phone, so you can keep going

The words she wants to hear when it gets hard

IF THE PLAN CHANGES

You already know your role

Plan two says who stays with her and who goes with the baby, so nobody has to decide that in the moment.

If she needs a cesarean, I will

If the baby goes to the NICU, I will

Who we call with news, and who calls everyone else

AFTER THE BIRTH

Keep watching out for her

- After a cesarean, help her the first few times she gets out of bed.[3]
- After a cesarean, call her OB right away for fever, chills, leg pain, leaking from the incision, heavy bleeding, worsening pain or shortness of breath.[3]
- Preeclampsia can also develop in the weeks after birth. Keep the warning signs above where you can both see them at home.[2]



Her OB or MFM team knows her situation best. When in doubt, call them first.

SOURCES, CHECKED NOVEMBER 2026

1 ACOG, "How to Tell When Labor Begins". www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/how-to-tell-when-labor-begins
2 ACOG, "Preeclampsia and High Blood Pressure During Pregnancy". www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/preeclampsia-and-high-blood-pressure-during-pregnancy
3 ACOG, "Cesarean Birth". www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/cesarean-birth
4 Count the Kicks, "How to Count". countthekicks.org/why-we-count/how-to-count-the-kicks/

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