

# Birth Preparedness Checklist

As you move toward your due date, being prepared will help you feel more relaxed and confident about becoming parents. Remember that your “due date” begins 2 weeks before your EDD, so it’s important to be ready!

## 36 WEEKS (4 WEEKS BEFORE EDD)

Pelvic rocks two or three times a day for 15 to 20 minutes each time to help prevent back labor

Take short naps, if you have the opportunity

Listen to your relaxation CD at least once a day

Call or email your doula after each of your doctor’s appointments

Increase your water intake (**you should already be drinking 1 oz. of water for each two pounds of your body weight per day**) Fruits and vegetables are great sources of water -- the most waterlogged fruits and vegetables are watermelon, oranges, apples, cucumbers, iceberg lettuce, and tomatoes. Eating these will help with fluid retention and swelling, too! **Dehydration can cause pre-term labor.**

## 37 WEEKS (3 WEEKS BEFORE EDD)

Bags packed (see What to Pack handout for details)

Alternative route to hospital prepared in case of traffic problems

Prepare two food baskets or bags (one each for the labor and postpartum nurses)

Car seat installed properly

## 38 WEEKS (2 WEEKS BEFORE EDD)

Evening Primrose Oil (EPO) capsules for perineal massage and vaginal suppository WITH caregiver's approval\*

Working phone card or lots of change for phone calls (cell phones don’t always work in hospitals)

## LEAVING FOR THE HOSPITAL -- EAT BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Bags packed (separate bags for labor and postpartum)

Ice chest, juice and snacks (yogurt, bananas, soup, fruit, etc.) for mom and partner

Insurance card and copy of pre-admission paperwork

Phone list and contraction timer filled out for hospital staff

Two or more pillows with colorful pillowcases (not your favorite pillows or pillowcases)

Towel and large sheet of plastic or trash bag in car (in case of release of membranes)

Nurses’ baskets or bags

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\* *Evening Primrose Oil (EPO) contains essential fatty acids that our bodies use to make the same prostaglandins their body would typically make as labor gets near. Our typical American diet is often deficient in these fatty acids, so EPO is suggested as a dietary supplement, not as a medicinal substance or treatment. Some midwives recommend 1000 mg three times a day orally; others recommend taking 500-1,000 mg orally per day. There is currently some question as to whether or not orally ingested EPO has a positive effect on softening your cervix. Some women insert a punctured capsule vaginally, during their last bathroom visit in the night (usually between 3:00 and 5:00 A.M.) beginning 10 to 14 days prior to due date and continuing until baby comes. I encourage you to do your own research.*

