

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF PREMATURE LABOR¹

Call your doctor immediately if you have any of these symptoms:

- **CONTRACTIONS** (the abdomen tightens like a fist) every 10 minutes or more often
- **CHANGE IN VAGINAL DISCHARGE**—leaking fluid or bleeding from the vagina
- **PELVIC PRESSURE**—the feeling that the baby is pushing down
- Low, dull **BACKACHE**
- **CRAMPS** that feel like a menstrual period
- **ABDOMINAL CRAMPS** with or without diarrhea

In most cases, premature labor begins unexpectedly and with no known cause. Call your doctor right away if you think you are any having symptoms of labor. Having your baby before 37 weeks could be serious.

Your doctor may provide interventions to try to stop or delay preterm labor. You also may get some medicine that can improve your baby's health, even if early delivery occurs.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER—Birth is a complex and wonderful process. Fortunately, the outcome for most women is a full term, healthy baby. By understanding your risk of premature birth, you may be able to take early, proactive steps to help have a positive experience for you and your baby.

¹marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/preterm-labor-and-pre-mature-birth.aspx#