

Self-Palpation



P a t i e n t I n f o r m a t i o n

Self-palpation is a helpful way for you to check for uterine contractions on your own. Early awareness of contractions can reduce the risk of preterm labor and/or delivery.

What is a contraction? Contractions happen when the uterine muscles tighten and feel hard, and then they relax and feel soft. These contractions will come and go. You may or may not feel pain in your abdomen (belly), upper legs and lower back. Contractions happen normally in every pregnancy. Contractions that happen too often can lead to preterm labor and cause your baby to be born prematurely.

What Does A Contraction Feel Like

- Tighten the muscle in your upper arm and feel how hard it is
- Relax you muscle and it becomes soft
- Feel the top of your belly (where the baby starts) while you are lying down on your side. If it is soft and you can easily press your fingertips in, your uterus is not contracting. If it is hard and you can not press your fingertips in, this is a contraction

Steps To Self-Palpation

Follow the steps once or twice a day as indicated by Health Care Provider. It is also important to do if you are having any signs or symptoms of preterm labor.

- Hydrate - Drink 1-2 cups of water
- Urinate - Empty your bladder
- Rest - Lie on your side using pillows as support and comfort
- Palpate - Put you fingers on the top of your belly. Feel and count how many contractions you feel in one hour.