

Talking Points for the Events of Late Pregnancy

What: Important developments right before labor begins that benefit baby, mother and the course of labor. Chemical signals are passed between mother and baby through the placenta. A hormonal or mechanical change in baby, mother or uterus will cause a complimentary change in the other two.

Why: You can influence some events to the positive*

When: Best if baby & mom's body decide when labor begins. Changes begin 6-8 weeks before labor begins. Baby starts everything.

Let's look at how it all begins:

Slide 1	4D Baby	Baby starts everything. (Lung maturity?) Sends a chemical signal to the uterus.
Slide 2	BH Tshirt	Braxton Hicks contractions increase. Query: What do Braxton Hicks do?
Slide 3	Power Lifter	Increase uterine muscle fibers and power..
Slide 3	Lower Uterine Segment	The placenta is producing more prostaglandins which will cause the bottom part of the uterus to soften and become thin.
Slide 4	Butter	The cervix gets as soft as butter.
Slide 5	Cervix effaces	Thin out. We call that effacement
Slide 6	Balloon Game	Balloon Game
Slide 7	Fat baby	The placenta and membranes become more porous, letting through larger molecules. Baby will gain enough iron iron and immunities for about 6 months. Baby also gains brown fat for temperature regulation. Really important.
Slide 8	Colostrum	Women begin producing more colostrum at the same time and baby is just now developing the ability to suck and swallow
Slide 9	Stations	Women's ovaries produce relaxin, allowing her joints to loosen and baby to descend deeply in her pelvis. Explain descent
Slide 10	Engagement	Women will experience more of the classic complaints of pregnancy: urination and lighter interrupted sleep. (Pause. Discuss why this is healthy for the baby)
Slide 11	Cervix Moves	The cervix slides forward (anterior) to line up with the vagina.
Slide 12	Baby Rotates	The placenta begins making connexin that will help the uterus contract in a coordinated way. In late pregnancy, those practice contractions help baby find the perfect fit, like a key in a lock.
Slide 13	Cervix Opens	Finally, a woman's cervix may begin to open a little bit at the end of pregnancy. (Pass around the cheerio, ritz and bagel in a bag)

Key Points

All of these actions can potentiate each other (further descent of baby = more movement of cervix from anterior to forward).

The 6 ways of making progress start well before labor begins and continue until baby is born.

How accurate is your due date? Within what range is it healthiest to have a baby (38-42 weeks). What week is healthiest for your baby? Discuss gestational age.

Do this: fold page 165 in somewhere on the arrow. If you start labor before it's time, what will you be missing?

Bibliographies

<http://mikedelaine69.typepad.com/blog/2011/02/even-with-fetal-lung-maturity-babies-delivered-prior-to-39-weeks-are-at-risk.html>