

Janine Smith

Checklist for Induction	
1	Do you understand what is happening? Do you need more information or reassurance about why you are being induced, about the induction process or about what to expect at the hospital?
2	Pack well Your labour needs to start in hospital and this can be a drawn out process – pack items to keep you distracted, entertained, relaxed and comfortable.
3	Make the space yours Whether you are in a private room or a shared bay, make your space comfortable for you so you can feel relaxed, comfortable and secure.
4	Can you be more at ease? You are waiting for labour to start and get going which can be a nerve-racking, anxious time. Patience is key, along with being as relaxed as possible so you can encourage your labour to start. Keep an eye on how you are feeling.
5	Are you using your breathing to stay calm and focused? If you are feeling tense, panicky or nervous, focus on your breathing to slow your heart rate, to give you something positive to focus on and to get you back in control.
6	Do you need to eat? You don't have to eat a lot but nibbling on fruit and healthy snacks can help give you more energy. If you are waiting for pessaries to work, try to eat as normal – take some food into hospital with you or go to the hospital cafe.
7	Are you going to the loo regularly? Going to the loo often will keep your bladder empty and you will be more comfortable.
8	Are you drinking plenty of water? Hospitals can be warm and it can also be easy to forget to drink enough. If you have a bottle of water, that help you keep track.
9	Are you resting? Whether you are waiting for contractions to start, or they are now coming and you want to be upright, rest is still important – conserve your energy. While waiting or with mild contractions, it can be helpful to balance pottering about and sitting/lying down as this stage could last for a few hours.
10	When your contractions get going Try to be instinctive and work with them: move, breathe, be upright, accept them, work with them, ask about pain management. Move onto the labour & birth checklist to focus on your needs as labour intensifies and you move into a delivery suite.
11	Focus on you, your experience and your needs No-one knows how long induction will take to work – it can be effective and fast but it can also take time. Try not to compare yourself to other women who may be sharing your induction space – it is a unique experience.
12	Ask questions If something is suggested and you don't know what it is or why you need it, ask for more information. No-one will mind and it can be important to feel informed and included. Talk to your midwife so you know what your options are and what the next steps might be. Speak up if something doesn't feel right or you feel like you are not being listened to. This communication can also be the responsibility of birth partners.

Labour can last for several hours, sometimes leading into days: there isn't a right length of labour which is why it is important to make decisions as you go because your needs may alter.

It can be important for you to be comfortable, rested, able to work with your contractions, to be supported, to be calm and to be able to help your contractions work as effectively as possible.

As labour and birth can be unpredictable, you may need to make different decisions and your birth plan may change. Good communication makes a big difference to how informed and included you are, so it can help to ask questions to better understand your options and what can happen next, including having a caesarean.

Based on a range of evidence, experience and maternity policies:

- The Midwife's Labour & Birth Handbook
- Royal College of Midwives (RCM)
- Maye's Midwifery
- Pregnancy & Birth by Sheila Kitzinger
- Dynamic Positions in Birth by Margaret Jowitt
- Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG)
- NICE Guidelines
- Dr Sara Wickham
- Dr Rachel Reed
- NHS

About Janine

I have worked with expectant and new parents for over 20 years and I also attend births as a doula. Every parent I work with is different, as is every labour I have been part of, including my own. As the person who is pregnant and in labour, it's important you are at the centre of your care, which is why I encourage you to personalise your birth preparation, to think about what matters to you. This means you can be honest, ask questions and plan around more realistic expectations.

Effective birth preparation means planning beyond your ideal birth, so you are better able to manage any challenges and changes.

Ways to work with me:

- Join the Birth & Baby Community
- Arrange for 1:1 sessions
- Read my antenatal course and birth guides

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Notes & Questions