



Cervidil Induction - Information, Tips and Strategies

Contents

The What, When, Where, Why and How of Cervidil	3
Questions to ask your care provider before, during and after	4
Top Tips for Induction with Cervidil	5
Secrets for Sleeping in the Hospital	6
8 Printable Mantras for Induction through Birth	8

The What, When, Where, Why and How of Cervidil

What

Cervidil is a medication used in the induction of labor. The generic name is dinoprostone and it is a synthetic prostaglandin.

In the most basic of descriptions it looks like a flat tampon. The medication in gel form is contained in a mesh pouch and there is a long tape attached for retrieval from the vagina.

When

Cervidil can be recommended by care providers when labor induction is suggested, but the woman's cervix has not dilated or dilated a very small amount. It is used for cervical ripening or cervical softening.

Define that!

Prostaglandin: A hormone-like substance that have control of various functions in the body.

Did you know...

It is widely thought that human semen contains a high concentration of prostaglandins

Where

Cervidil is usually administered in a hospital setting by a midwife or OB where the woman can have continuous contraction and fetal monitoring done. In some areas of the world, women are sent home with Cervidil inserted, but this is an uncommon practice and not suggested by the manufacturer.

Why

When a woman's care provider recommends induction and her cervix is not favorable for the use of oxytocin, Cervidil is often used. Induction with oxytocin is generally done when the cervix is softened (effaced) and starting to dilate.

How

Cervidil is inserted vaginally by your nurse, OB or Midwife. Most women are asked to stay in bed for the first two hours after insertion. Some women report a discomfort with this process. The cervidil stays in the vagina generally for 12 hours or if regular labor contractions begin or any unusual side effects are being experienced. Sometimes the cervidil will fall out. Usually moms stay in bed or in a chair during the 12 hours, but can get up and go to the bathroom.

Questions to Ask Your Care Provider Before, During and After Cervidil

Use your 'BRAINS'

B – Benefit

What are the benefits?

R - Risk

What are the risks?

A - Alternatives

Are there any alternatives?

I – Intuition

What does my 'gut' say?

N – Not Now

Can we wait?

S – Smile

All questions are better when you ask with a smile !

Great Questions *Before* Cervidil:

- 1) What is the reason(s) that induction is recommended?
- 2) Can the induction be delayed for a few days to allow labor to start of it's own?
- 3) Can you explain the plan for induction?
- 4) What usually happens with Cervidil?
- 5) What are the risks?
- 6) Are there any alternatives to an induction?
- 7) Are there any options for when cervidil is administered?
- 8) How will I know if I am having an adverse reaction to cervidil and what should I do to alert the nurses?

Great Questions *During* Cervidil:

- 1) Can the lights be kept low or off to make sleeping easier?
- 2) Can the volume on the monitors be turned down very low of off to make sleeping easier?
- 3) Can I get up to use the restroom on my own?
- 4) What time will the Cervidil be removed?

Great Questions *After* Cervidil:

- 1) Can I take a shower?
- 2) Can I eat a meal?
- 3) Are there options for the next phase of induction? Is another dose of Cervidil an option if my cervix is still unfavorable?
- 4) What are the benefits and risks of the next phase of induction?

Top Tips for Induction With Cervidil

1) Eat Before You Arrive At the Hospital

The meal before you arrive at the hospital might be your last chance to have something that you actually enjoy. Consider having your favorite meal and really celebrating this time.

2) Set realistic expectations with yourself, your partner and your family

Usually cervidil only softens the cervix. This means that at the end of the 12 hours with cervidil it is most likely that your cervix will only be more effaced/thinned. Cervidil can start labor, but this isn't usually the case. Try not to 'count on' labor starting immediately and instead be accepting of any change that cervidil makes.

Set this expectation with your family as well. Let them know that the 12 hours of cervidil will likely be a restful time for you and that you can provide updates when that changes.

3) Alert your nurse about any unusual symptoms

The most common side effect of Cervidil is uterine hyperstimulation (also called Tachysystole) or contractions that are occurring at a very rapid pace (less than 3 minutes apart). Some women are excited to have contractions start and will think this is what is supposed to happen, but this pace could be a risk for the baby and should be addressed.

4) Keep in contact with your doula/support team

If you are using a doula make sure she is aware of the plan for induction and keep her in the loop on decision making and timing of the Cervidil so that she can best support you.

5) SLEEP, SLEEP, SLEEP!!

Sleep should be a top priority with Cervidil. See the following Chapter titled "Secrets for Sleeping in the Hospital" for great information.

6) Shower and Eat a Meal After Cervidil is removed

Cervidil is usually removed after it has been in for 12 hours. If regular contractions have begun you may be unable to eat and shower. However, if contractions have not begun you should be able to eat a meal and have a shower before the next step of induction begins. Fueling your body with a meal is so important and the shower will make most women feel good and help get the day started mentally.

7) Stay positive!

Keeping a positive outlook on induction can be difficult. Focus on the positive! Surround yourself with good support and embrace all cervical change that occurs.



Secrets for Sleeping in the Hospital

Sleeping in the hospital isn't an easy feat. The hospital environment has an entirely different feel than our bedrooms at home. There are sounds, smells and lights that can impact the quality of our sleep. There are also many hospital personnel that seem to parade in and out of the room at all hours of the day and night.

Set the Scene for Sleep

Lighting

Hospital lighting is usually quite bad. Most hospital rooms have big fluorescent lights that assault the eyes. Usually you can turn down lights in your room or turn them off completely. For the bathroom, consider bringing in a strand of white Christmas lights or battery operated candles to prevent the need for flipping on those lights. Make sure to let your care providers know that your goal is to sleep and that keeping lights as low as possible (or off) is a preference.

Smells

If the smell of a hospital bothers you, consider improving this smell by having something that you enjoy smelling packed in your bag for labor. Ideas for this include a favorite lotion, room spray or essential oil used with a diffuser.



Sounds

The hospital is alive at all hours of the day and night. From your room you can often hear a lot of what is going on outside of your room such as the movement of people, conversations in the hallway and even sounds from other labor rooms. Inside your room the biggest source of noise is the fetal heart rate monitor. The volume on this monitor can be adjusted and can even be turned down so you can't hear it. Ask your nurse to help with this and let her know that keeping the room quiet for sleep is a top priority. Other ideas to help with sound is to cover hospital sounds with your own music or with white noise from a machine or white noise app on your phone. Streaming apps like Pandora and Spotify have great ambient music channels that can be used to make your room sound like a spa. The other option would be try and stop sounds altogether by using earplugs.

Secrets for Sleeping in the Hospital

Discuss Your Options

Your care providers might have options for allowing you to sleep in the hospital. This might include limiting visits to your room while you are sleeping. Sometimes your nurse can check on you at a different schedule and make sure non essential personnel like medical techs wait until morning to refill supplies and perform not urgent tasks.

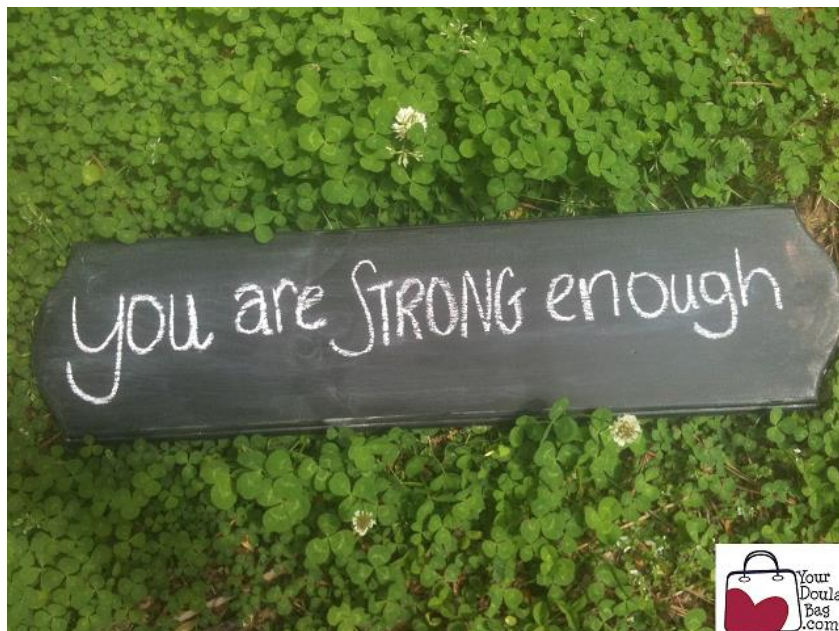
Another option that might be available for sleep is a sedative such as Ambien. If you are offered Ambien or another medication and haven't taken it before, make sure you ask any questions you may have about how it works and what to expect.

Comfort Is Key

Sleeping in a hospital bed with monitors around you can be challenging. To increase your comfort consider bringing in items from home such as pillows and a favorite blanket. You can also wear your own clothing which can bring more comfort than the one-size-fits-all hospital gown that is provided.

Put the Smartphone Away!

If you are tempted to Google something in the middle of the night or have a friend that just might send you a 1am text, consider turning off your smartphone completely. Sleep is so important and having it interrupted by someone 'checking on you' is so frustrating. You can prepare family in advance by letting them know that your top priority is sleep and that you will contact them when you wake up or after the Cervidil is removed.



8 printable mantras for induction with cervidil through birth

Journey

Labor is your unique journey. We don't know exactly how it will go, but at the end is the gift for a lifetime.

Time

Time in labor can seem both incredibly fast and painfully slow. Shift your focus away from time and accept that we have little control over it.

Normal

No two labors are the same. Yours will be different from all of the women before and after you. This difference is normal.

Strength

There is a strength within each of us that allows us to journey through the process of labor. Trust that it is there.

A decorative background at the top of the page featuring a network diagram with blue nodes and connecting lines.

Noodle

Allow your body to be limp and loose like a noodle. This allows your cervix to open easier.

Choice

Your labor choices are personal. You have the right to make choices that are different from friends and family. You can even change your mind about your birth plan. All choices are okay.

Rest

Labor and birth are physical activities that require endurance. Allow yourself to rest whenever you can and recharge your body.

Together

You and your baby are working together in the process of labor and birth. Over 300,000 other women around the world are going through labor on this day.



Care to share? We would like to hear your story and share it with other women who are looking for more information about Cervidil Inductions. Please send us your story!

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