

PPROM PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Your baby lies in an amniotic sac of fluid or 'waters'. Your waters normally break when you are 37-42 weeks pregnant, but for 2% of pregnancies this will happen before 37 weeks. This is called Preterm Prelabour Rupture of Membranes (PPROM).

How do I know if my waters have broken early?

It is likely that you will have attended your local maternity unit with fluid trickling from the vagina. A doctor will do a speculum examination, like a smear test, to look for fluid that usually sits within the amniotic sac. Other tests such as a swab from the vagina may be done to help confirm the diagnosis.

What are the risks if my waters break early?

You may go into labour prematurely (early). The highest risk of this happening is usually within the first 1-3 days which is why admission to the maternity unit will be recommended. You will be able to discuss the risks of preterm birth with a neonatologist (baby doctor) and have a tour of the baby unit if you would like. You may be transferred to another hospital, if the baby unit does not have any cots available.

There is a small risk of infection. You will be offered oral antibiotics for 10 days, to reduce this risk.

Going home from hospital with PPRM

If there is no infection you may be able to go home. You should self-monitor by:

- Checking that your temperature is normal (< 37 °C) every 4-8 hours
- Checking that colour of fluid does not change by wearing a pad

Contact the hospital immediately if you have:

- Raised temperature (more than 37 °C)
- Vaginal bleeding
- Feeling generally unwell or 'flu-like'
- Abdominal pain
- Contractions
- If the fluid becomes greenish or smelly
- Baby's movements change

What should I avoid at home?

Do not use tampons

Avoid sexual intercourse

Avoid swimming

How will you monitor me and my baby?

If it is considered safe for you to be discharged from the hospital, then you will be seen twice a week at your local maternity unit for monitoring and blood tests. Every 2 weeks an ultrasound scan will be done to check your baby's growth, the fluid levels and the blood flow through the umbilical cord.

When will my baby be born?

Your doctor will have to take several things into consideration such as your stage of pregnancy, signs of infection, test results and then should be able to advise how and when delivery should take place. In general, if there are signs of infection, then early delivery will usually be recommended. If there are no signs of infection, then it may be possible to continue with the pregnancy.