

Foley's Catheter



Induction of labour is a process designed to start labour artificially. This process is used when your doctor and midwife have identified a medical reason for you to birth your baby sooner.

What is a Foley's Catheter?

The Foley's Catheter is a thin tube with an inflatable balloon at the end that can hold 40ml of sterile water.

How is the catheter used?

The doctor or midwife will perform a speculum examination (in the same way a pap smear is carried out) and a catheter will be placed through the cervix, the balloon will then be inflated. The catheter will then be taped to your leg with gentle traction. This allows the catheter to place pressure on the cervix and help it to open.

Where will I have the catheter inserted?

Once your doctor and midwife have decided that a Foley's Catheter is needed, an appointment will be made for you to attend the Maternity Unit/Birth Unit or Nepean Women's Acute Assessment Unit (WAAU).

When will the catheter be inserted?

You will need to attend at 7am on the day booked by your doctor or midwife.

How long will I be in hospital?

If you have low risk factors you may be able to go home and return the following day for assessment. You will be asked to return between 6-8am the following day.

If you have some risk factors or we are concerned about your health we will ask you to stay in hospital and you will be assessed the following morning.

What if the catheter falls out?

If the catheter falls out on the day of insertion, please call the Maternity Unit/Birth Unit or Nepean WAAU for advice. The midwife may ask you to come back to be assessed.

If the catheter falls out overnight and you have no concerns, please call the Maternity Unit/Birth Unit or Nepean WAAU at 6am.

How long will it take for my baby to be born?

The process of inducing labour is different for every woman. There may be a need for further processes to get you into active labour. Once we determine that your cervix is opening and softening we can move you into a birth room to break your waters and start your labour.

Important things to remember

If you have any bleeding, your waters break, your baby's movements decrease, or any other concerns please call the Maternity Unit/Birth Unit or Nepean WAAU and speak to a midwife.

Birth Unit/Maternity Service

Blue Mountains: (02) 4784 6572

Hawkesbury: (02) 4560 5672

Lithgow: (02) 6350 2324

Nepean: (02) 4734 2294

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