**Induction of labour: Cook Balloon**

**Patient Information Leaflet**

**Information for women who are having an induction of labour.**

Having a baby is a very special time in the life of a woman and her family and we want to make sure this is a good and safe experience.

Induction of labour is recommended at 41 weeks 5 days (NICE guidelines 2008). There are a number of reasons why induction of labour is recommended. Your doctor will explain the reason for induction with you before offering you an induction. They will also discuss the benefits and risks of the process with you.

Inducing labour takes time, sometimes a couple of days and may follow a number of steps. These could include softening (or ripening) your cervix (the neck of the womb), breaking your waters, and giving you a drip containing hormones through your vein to encourage your contractions to start. You may not need all of these steps but this sheet gives you information about the first stage of inducing your labour (ripening your cervix using a ‘cervical ripening catheter’, also known as, Cook® Balloon).

The aim of the induction is to enable changes in your cervix to occur in order to break your waters and deliver your baby.

**What is a Cook® Balloon?**

A Cook Balloon is a silicone tube which has two inflatable balloons which are inserted and inflated with a safe fluid, ‘normal saline’, and deflated before removal.

**What do I need to do on the day of my induction?**

You should telephone the Antenatal Ward between 08:00 to 08:30 on the day your induction is booked to discuss what time to come into the Maternity Unit.

The telephone number for Thameside Antenatal is: 0208 934 2423.

You will usually be admitted to the antenatal ward. On some occasions a decision may be taken to delay your induction, this will be discussed with you and will be based on your individual needs. Your induction maybe postponed if another mother has a greater need at any point during your admission, this is to ensure the safety of mothers and babies.

When you are asked to come in you are welcome to bring one birthing partner with you throughout the day. Other visitors are welcome between 15:00 and 20:00. Your partner may only stay if you are in labour.
What is Induction of labour with Cook Balloon?
Induction of labour (IOL) is a process used to safely start labour artificially. On admission the balloon is inserted into the cervical canal during an internal examination by the Doctor or Midwife.

The first of the two balloons (balloon 1) is inflated with a safe liquid called ‘normal saline’ on the uterine side of the cervix and the second (balloon 2) is then inflated in the vaginal side of the cervix. See image below.

The two balloons then adapt to the contour of the cervical canal to minimise discomfort. When the catheter is removed, the cervix will be assessed for dilatation (opening of the cervix), and based on the findings a plan will be made with you regarding the next stage of the induction of labour.

The Cook Cervical Ripening Balloon is made to naturally and gradually dilate the cervix and help start labour. Ripening and dilation works by the balloons’ gentle and constant pressure from both the internal and external cervical canal. This allows pressure from the two balloons to ripen the cervix.

As the Balloon does NOT contain any medication, it reduces the risk of side effects. Once inserted into the vagina the Cook Balloon will usually stay there for a maximum of 12 hours. It can be easily removed should it need to be taken out before this time.

What are the benefits of the Cook Balloon?
The Cook Balloon safely softens and opens the cervix without the use of medications, and therefore reduces potential side effects. The silicone balloon adapts to the individual shape of the cervical canal. The balloon is easily inserted and removed.

What happens 12 hours after the Cook balloon is inserted?
- The Cook Balloon will be deflated before being removed.
- Another internal assessment will be undertaken to assess if your waters can be broken. If this is the case a few hours will be given to allow for baby’s head to descend. The midwife will discuss this with you.
- When a delivery bed becomes available you will be transferred to the delivery suite for your waters to be broken. Following this you will be advised to mobilise for 2 hours to allow time for contractions to start.
- Another internal examination maybe required by a midwife or doctor if your waters cannot be broken, and the findings and plan of care will be discussed with you.
When should I speak to a midwife?
• If you experience regular contractions (1 contraction every 5 minutes).
• If your waters break.
• If the Cook Balloon falls out.
• If there is any bleeding.
• If you are worried.

If labour starts, the Cook Balloon maybe removed earlier than 12 hours.

What if my cervix has not changed?
If there has been no change in your cervix the doctor will discuss further options with you at this time. These may include:
• Prostaglandins.
• A caesarean section.

Further information
If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know.
This leaflet is provided by Kingston Hospital Foundation NHS Trust NHS Trust. This information was checked in June 2017.

Contact Details
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www.kingstonmaternity.org.uk
Triage line: 020 8934 2802

Complaints and compliments
Please speak to the midwife in charge or if you would prefer you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), if you would like to comment on the service we have provided. PALS are available Monday – Friday from 9am to 5pm: they can be found at the junction of the link corridor and Bearnard Meade Wing. Ask a volunteer or a member of staff to show you the way.
**Direct line 0208 934 3993 Internal x3993 Bleep 993 Email** pals@kingstonhospital.nhs.uk