Thank you for choosing Mercy for this special event! We look forward to caring for you during your labor and delivery.

While some inductions are recommended for medical reasons, some are “elective.” An elective induction is when you or your doctor choose to start labor without a medical reason. It is very important to discuss with your physician possible complications and alternatives to an “elective” induction before deciding on this option.

Types of Inductions

- **Medical Induction** – Your induction is scheduled for _________________ on _________________.
  It is important to call the Birthing Unit at (515) 358-3000 one hour prior to your scheduled time to determine if your induction will be initiated at your scheduled time.

- **Elective Induction** – Elective inductions are scheduled on an “on call” basis only as time and bed availability allow. If you live more than 30 minutes away, be sure to let us know the night before. The charge nurse will start making calls at 5 a.m. for morning inductions and 5 p.m. for evening inductions to give a time for you to arrive. We will try to give you as much notice as possible, but it is important to be readily available when you are called to ensure your room remains available for you. If you have not received a phone call by 8 a.m. you may call and talk to the charge nurse for an update on the status of your induction.

How may induction of labor be done?

Different methods can be used to induce labor. You and your doctor will decide which methods are right for you.

**Cervical ripening medications** – These medications are given to soften and dilate your cervix. There are two cervical ripening medications we often use at Mercy. One is called Cervidil®, which is inserted into your vagina where it is left in place for up to 12 hours and then removed. The other is Cytotec®, which is a tablet you can take orally or is placed in your vagina behind your cervix. Cervical ripening medications are typically started in the evening with Pitocin to start the next day. You will be encouraged to rest throughout the night as active labor will be more likely to occur the following day. There is a slight chance the cervical ripening medication may put you into active labor.

**Pitocin®** – Pitocin is a man-made form of the hormone oxytocin—a natural hormone found in your body. This medicine causes your uterus to contract. It is given through an IV and the dose is slowly increased until a satisfactory labor pattern occurs. Typically Pitocin is started the next morning after the cervical ripening medications have made your cervix soft and dilated.

**Rupture of membranes (breaking your water)** – If your water has not already broken, your doctor may do this for you. Breaking your bag of water will also help start contractions. This is done with a small hook that makes a hole in the bag of water. Your cervix must be dilated enough to safely insert the hook, and the baby’s head well applied to the cervix before this is considered and done.
**What can I expect?**

It is OK to eat a light meal before you come to the hospital for your induction. Please remove all jewelry and piercings prior to admission. When you arrive at the hospital you will need to check in with admitting on the third floor of the East Tower. You will be brought to your room and asked to change into a gown. After you are in bed fetal monitors will be applied. You will then have an IV started in your hand or arm to administer fluids and medications. Blood work will be done and a physical examination will be performed before starting any induction medications.

You will be monitored continuously; this means you will have to be in bed or sitting most of the time. You will be encouraged to change positions frequently and will be allowed to get up to go to the bathroom.

 Occasionally, despite medication used for your induction, you may not go into labor. If this occurs your doctor will discuss with you options such as Cesarean section or inducing labor at a later time.

**Possible complications**

Although labor induction is a common procedure, there are possible complications. Please ask your doctor about the risks and benefits of labor induction.

**Thank you for choosing Mercy**

We look forward to caring for you during your labor and delivery. We anticipate your induction will be initiated as scheduled. However, because we never know how many spontaneous labor patients we will have, your induction may be slightly delayed.

Patient safety is our first priority, and your induction will never be delayed without your safety and your baby’s safety considered first.

Your Mercy medical team of nurses, obstetricians, perinatologists, neonatologists, pediatricians and anesthesiologists all strive for the best possible outcome for both you and your baby. Decisions for your care are based on you an your baby’s medical history and current health condition. We encourage you to ask questions and contribute to your care throughout your hospital stay.