



PRECIPITOUS LABOR



Precipitous labor refers to an exceptionally fast labor and delivery process, typically lasting less than three hours from the onset of regular contractions to delivery.

Maternal risks

- Increased risk of lacerations and tears
- Uterine tachysystole (more than 5 contractions per 10 minutes in 2 consecutive intervals; intervention required to optimize uterine blood flow and oxygenation)
- Retained placenta, postpartum hemorrhage (PPH), and placental abruption
- Psychological trauma or emotional distress due to the sudden and intense nature of labor

Fetal risks

- Risk of birth trauma such as shoulder dystocia
- Increased risk of hypoxia or birth asphyxia if the baby's head delivers before full dilation of the cervix
- Risk of umbilical cord compression or prolapse
- Potential aspiration of amniotic fluid and/or meconium aspiration syndrome

Nursing assessment

- Monitor maternal vital signs closely, including blood pressure, pulse, and respiratory rate.
- Assess fetal heart rate patterns continuously to detect signs of distress.
- Evaluate the progression of labor, noting the frequency, duration, pattern, and intensity of contractions.
- Assess maternal emotional state and provide reassurance and support.

Nursing interventions

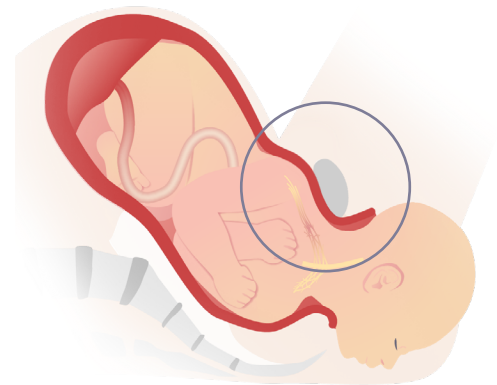
- Have a precipitous birth kit in the room. Call 911 if outside of the hospital.
- Encourage comfort measures such as breathing techniques and back rubs to manage anxiety and pain.
- Position changes to optimize fetal descent and reduce the risk of injury. Support infant as it emerges.
- Provide coaching and support during the pushing phase to minimize trauma.
- Prepare for emergency interventions to manage shoulder dystocia and/or cord prolapse.
- Administer pain relief options, if time allows.

Client education

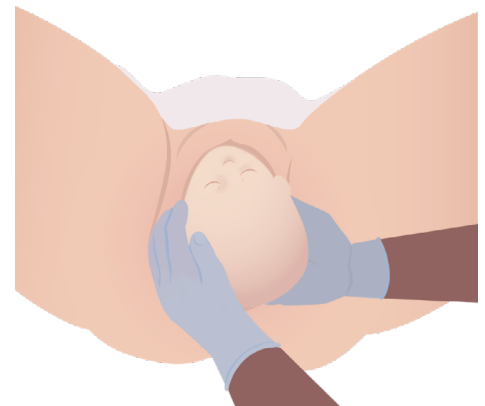
- Inform the client about when to seek immediate medical assistance if labor progresses rapidly or if any concerning symptoms arise.
- Educate the client about the signs and symptoms of precipitous labor, including rapid and intense contractions, sudden urge to push, and feelings of pressure in the pelvis.
- Provide information on postpartum recovery, including the importance of seeking medical attention for any signs of complications such as excessive bleeding or pain.



Placental abruption



Shoulder dystocia



Supporting infant's head