



Natural Induction Methods

Natural induction is an intervention and, like all interventions, it carries risks. It is best to wait until your due date before trying any natural induction, unless your caregiver is insisting on a medical induction that you are hoping to avoid. All natural induction techniques should be discussed with your doctor or midwife. Time is the best natural method to induce. Babies come when they are ready and your body is ready. Use caution if attempting any of these. Always weigh the risks and benefits.

Walk

Staying active and moving your pelvis can help the baby engage and encourage contractions to start or strengthen. Walk along a curb, one foot up on the curb and the other one in the gutter, then turn around and go the other way. Sounds strange, but it can really work. Also walking sideways up a flight of stairs is great.

Bumpy Car Ride

The combination of movement and relaxation (someone else should be driving) can help get the baby into the right position for birth. You should have something on the car seat to protect it in case your membranes release.

Relax

Anxiety can delay the onset of labor. Relax in a warm bath with dim lights, candles, and your favorite relaxing music. Use slow, calm breathing techniques while focusing on relaxing all of the muscles in your pelvic floor.

Visualization

Imagine holding your baby in your arms. Visualize your ideal labor.

Nipple Stimulation

This is one of the safest forms of induction because it uses the mother's natural oxytocin. One popular method is to apply warm compresses to your breasts and alternately stimulate each breast manually or using a breast pump for 15 minutes each until contractions begin. Another, gentler method is to get into a tub of comfortably warm water. Soak a dish towel or washcloth in the water, and drape it over the breasts. Roll one nipple in your fingers, through the towel, for up to 15 minutes, or as long as it takes to make a contraction happen. When the contraction begins, stop the stimulation. After it ends, wait about 5 minutes before stimulating the other nipple, and repeat the process for an hour. Then, take a break for 3 or 4 hours, and begin again. This is not as hard on the nipples as using a breast pump, and may work as well or better. One of the most effective ways is oral stimulation of your nipples, but this requires a willing partner ;)

Acupressure

The three main acupressure points for encouraging labor are: the roof of your mouth just behind the ridge behind the teeth; four finger widths above the inner ankle; and between the thumb and forefinger.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture has been proven to be very effective in getting labor started. Find an acupuncturist that specializes in pregnancy and fertility and make at least 3 appointments. In my experience, most mama's go into labor after the 2nd or 3rd treatment

Chiropractic Adjustments

Find a chiropractor that specializes in pregnant mamas. Making sure that your pelvis is properly aligned for labor is key.

Pineapple

If you can tolerate it without getting heartburn, eating lots of pineapple, especially the core of the pineapple, is said to begin labor because of the bromaline it contains.

Spicy Food

Hot and spicy food, and also Italian spices like basil and oregano are said to help start labor. Spicy Italian sausage is a great thing to add to your favorite dishes.

Cumin Tea

Place one teaspoon of cumin seeds in one cup of boiling water, allow to steep for 5 minutes and then drink. Do not drink more than one cup per day. Traditionally, a raw cube of potato is added to the tea, but the reason for this is unknown.

Spiced Tea

Make a cup of tea containing cinnamon, cloves and ginger. Drink one small glass every hour for no more than 6 hours. If this does not trigger labor, stop for 24 hours then try one more time. Do not attempt more than twice.

Sex

Semen applied to the cervix and having an orgasm can both stimulate labor. Swallowing semen also works well, because the prostaglandins are absorbed much more easily and quickly through the stomach. It may be your last chance to have sex for a long time, so you might as well enjoy it. :) Remember that the muscles of the uterus contract the exact same way during an orgasm as they do during labor, so the more you have the better.

Natural Prostaglandins

Semen is the best!! Borage oil, evening primrose oil, flax seed oil, and black currant oil all ripen and soften the cervix and increase the flexibility of the pelvic ligaments. You can take the capsules orally or put one or two in the vagina to melt. Use directly on the cervix only if the amniotic sac is still intact. These will only assist in softening the cervix and will not start labor. P

Swinging

Go to a local park or playground and swing on those nice big swings. What a great way to start labor!!

Blowing up Balloons

Increases intra-abdominal pressure and can put more pressure on the cervix to move things along, if the baby is already in the optimal position for birth (head down, baby's back to the left of your bellybutton).

Thigh Massage

Have your partner warm some lotion or oil in their palms, begin massage of the inner thighs working in a oval motion covering the area from the knolls to the groin. Be sure to tell your partner when the surges start so the massage can be stopped to prevent overstimulation.

Snuggle time/make out session

Snuggling and kissing releases oxytocin. Oxytocin is the hormone that gets your labor going, spend as much time snuggling and loving your partner as possible.