



## **PRETERM LABOR – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

If you have experienced any of the signs of a preterm labor or if you are being followed for a possible preterm delivery, the following measures may be advised.

1. **INCREASE YOUR REST PERIODS.** These rest periods may vary from twice a day for 2 hours each to modified bed rest, which consists of complete rest with activity limited to going to the bathroom and sitting up for meals. Again, resting on your side is helpful to keep your uterus relaxed. Also, elevating your bed so that your hips are slightly higher than your head will help to keep the pressure of your baby's head off your cervix.
2. **DECREASE STRENUOUS ACTIVITY.** No strenuous physical sports or activities are to be performed, including jogging, running, tennis, frequent trips up and down stairs.

NO SUSTAINED HEAVY LIFTING is permitted, including small children, grocery bags, and laundry.

NO HEAVY CLEANING should be done, including scrubbing and vacuuming floors, changing curtains, and moving furniture.

NO LONG TRIPS are permitted, including driving or being driven for more than 1 hour.

3. **EMPLOYMENT MAY BE CHANGED.** Outside work may have to be decreased, stopped, or modified depending on the type of job you have and your chances of experiencing a preterm birth.
4. **SEXUAL ACTIVITY.** Sexual activity may be limited or stopped depending on your medical condition and your chances to experience a preterm birth. Some women may be advised to stop sexual activity if they experience any of the signs of preterm labor and to report these signs if they persist for more than 1 hour. Other women may be advised to stop sexual activity completely. If you are advised to stop sexual activity completely, it is important for both you and your mate to talk about your feelings and to express your concerns to each other.
5. **BREAST PREPARATION.** Preparation should be avoided until 3 weeks prior to your delivery date. Breast preparation (breast massage or nipple rolling) may cause uterine contractions.
6. **CHILDBIRTH CLASSES.** These classes should be attended, but you may be advised to avoid all the physical exercises except for the breathing activities. Prenatal classes presented in your home are available if you are unable to attend at the hospital.