

Using the Pager: How, Why, & When

A registered midwife is on call for urgent clinical concerns 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The following document will help you determine when to use the Pager.

Tip: A general rule is to call the Pager if you are considering whether you should go to hospital.

Urgent Pregnancy-Related Concerns

Call the Pager and press 0 immediately if any of the following issues occur during pregnancy:

- Vaginal bleeding—bright red bleeding that resembles menstrual flow
- Severe abdominal pain that persists beyond a few minutes
- Car accident or fall with impact to your abdomen (after the first trimester)
- Painful, rhythmic uterine contractions before 37 weeks less than 10 minutes apart for 1 hour
- Severe headache that does not resolve with Tylenol
- Dizziness that persists after you have had a large glass of water and eaten a meal
- Temperature of 38.0° or higher
- Vomiting lasting more than 24 hours
- Fluid leaking or gushing from the vagina—enough to soak a menstrual pad
- Burning, stinging, or pain with urination
- After 26 weeks, perception of decreased fetal movement

Urgent Postnatal Concerns

Call the Pager and press 0 immediately with any of the following after the birth:

- Vaginal bleeding—completely soaking more than 1 menstrual pad in an hour
- Temperature of 38.0° or higher, sharp abdominal pains, foul-smelling vaginal discharge, or flu-like symptoms such as body aches or muscle weakness
- Pain when you take a deep breath, or not being able to breathe deeply that lasts more than a few minutes
- Any feelings or thoughts that you might harm yourself or your baby
- If you cannot get your baby to feed every 3 hours, or baby has a temperature of 38.0° or higher (take baby's temperature under the armpit), or decreased urine output (see [FAQs After the Birth](#) for amounts)

Call 911 immediately and then **call the Pager and press 0** with the following:

- Sudden active labour onset with an urge to push
- After your water breaks, if the umbilical cord is in the vagina or hanging from the vagina
- Heavy bleeding: passing large clots and soaking through pads quickly
- Newborn unresponsive, not breathing, or gray/blue colour

How to Page the On-Call Provider Urgently

1. Call the **Pager** at **778-355-9636**, and press '0' when you first hear the message. A midwife will respond as soon as possible. Please be aware that occasionally we are tied up with a delivery; in those cases it may take us some time to respond.
2. Please state clearly, or spell, your first and last name. Leave a brief message about your concern. Be available to answer the on-call provider's call on the number from which you called the Pager. When we call you back, it may be from an unidentified number.
3. If your call has not been returned within 15 minutes, please call RCH Labour & Delivery at **604-520-4587**, go to Royal Columbian Hospital, or call 911.

Communicating About Non-Urgent Concerns

The Pager is reserved for urgent situations pertaining to your health or your baby's health. We respectfully request that you use the Pager only for urgent concerns.

Tip: If you have questions, requests, or concerns that can wait until your next appointment, please make a note of them so that the care provider can review your concerns with you during your appointment.

If you have concerns that are time-sensitive, call **778-355-9636** and press '1' to leave a detailed message. Please be sure to include your full name and phone number. We will return your call during business hours. We do not check messages after 4pm.

The following are examples of non-urgent concerns:

- Vomiting or diarrhea that has lasted *less* than 24 hours—try Gravol, Imodium, Tylenol, frequent hydration and light, healthy foods for relief
- Yeast infection symptoms
- Allergy or cold symptoms, or questions re: what medication is safe to take
- Requests for:
 - Forms or letters for employers and/or fitness classes
 - Renewing a prescription
 - Referrals to other health-care providers
 - Lab test or ultrasound requisitions
- Questions about the timing of your scheduled home or clinic postnatal visit

There is no need to call us about:

- Loss of your mucus plug but not in labour
- “Heads up” that you think you might go into labour later that day
- Test results—if your results require urgent follow up, we will reach out to you prior to your next visit

For postnatal concerns—if you aren't sure if the concern is urgent, please review the [FAQs After the Birth](#) handout prior to using the Pager.

Administrative Questions

To arrange care with us, to book or change appointments, or if you are running late for an appointment, please call our office at **778-355-9596** and speak to one of our admin team members.

E-mail

If you have urgent health concerns during your pregnancy or postnatal period, please use the instructions above to communicate with your care team. Please do not send e-mail containing private information about your health.

Appropriate E-mail Questions

- Requests to make or change an appointment
- Requests for forms or letters for employers and/or fitness classes
- Updates re: a change of address or surname