

External Cephalic Version

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your doctor or nurse.

We are glad that you have chosen to have your baby at Northwestern Memorial Prentice Women's Hospital. Your doctor or midwife has scheduled you for an external cephalic version. Version is a method used to turn your baby from a breech (head up) or side lying position to a cephalic (head down) position. This position is the easiest way for the baby to move down the birth canal for a vaginal delivery.

Most often a version is done at or after the 37th week of pregnancy. It may take 5 to 30 minutes to try to turn the baby, but the total time in the hospital is about 4 hours. Since there is some discomfort involved, be sure to discuss pain management options with your doctor before coming to the hospital.

This booklet will help you prepare for your version. It will answer many of your questions. If you have other concerns, talk with your doctor or call the Labor and Delivery Unit at (312) 472-0800.

Getting Ready

Once your version has been scheduled, please pre-register by calling our Admitting Department at (312) 472-3610. You may also register online at www.nmh.org/maternity. Be sure to have your medical insurance information available.

Do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before your scheduled appointment time. For example, if your version is scheduled at 3 p.m., you may have a light breakfast before 9 a.m. Do not eat or drink anything after that time. You may take any needed medicine with sips of water, just enough to swallow the pills.

Jewelry cannot be worn during the version. Your family may keep your jewelry and wallet or purse. Other valuables should be left at home. Please bring your insurance card with you.

At the Hospital

Arrival

Please plan to arrive at Prentice Women's Hospital, 250 East Superior Street 1 hour before your scheduled time. This will allow time to prepare you for the version and for you to meet with the doctor.

Be sure to set aside enough time for travel including traffic, parking, and check-in.

Parking

Valet parking is available at Prentice. The parking garage is located at 222 E. Huron St., across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discount parking rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks, 1st floor, Prentice Women's Hospital (near the Superior entrance).

Check in

Stop at the Customer Service Desk on the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital. You will be directed to the patient registration desk on the 1st floor before coming to Labor and Delivery.

Once registration is complete, you will be directed to the 8th floor Labor and Delivery Unit. The unit secretary will greet you in Labor and Delivery and notify the nurse who will bring you to your room.

Labor and Delivery Unit

After you are escorted to your labor and delivery room, you will change into a hospital gown and give a urine sample.

The nurse will take your temperature, blood pressure, and pulse. While lying in bed, you will be connected to an external monitor that checks your baby's heart rate and records any contractions you may be having. This device will be placed around your belly like a belt. The nurse will review your medical and prenatal history with you.

The doctor will check the position of your baby using an ultrasound machine. If the baby is still breech, the nurse will place an IV (into the vein) line in your arm or hand. The IV will be used to give you fluids during the version.

A member of the anesthesia team will review your health history with you and talk about pain management options. This may include: narcotic pain medicine given in your IV or epidural anesthesia (numbing medicine injected into the lower back).

An obstetrics resident or your doctor will explain the version to you and discuss its risks in detail. Although rare, risks may include:

- Breaking of the fluid sac that surrounds the baby.
- A sudden decrease in the baby's heart rate.
- The onset of labor.
- Need for emergency C-section (Cesarean delivery).

After answering any questions you may have, you will be asked to sign consent forms for both version and the anesthesia (if used).

Visitors

There is a waiting room for patient's family members on the labor and delivery unit. One adult may stay with you during the version. Any other visitors must wait in the waiting room until after the version is done.

During the Version

Once the IV pain medicine or epidural is in effect, the version will begin. A drug may be given to relax your uterus. Your doctor, with the help of another doctor, pushes on your abdomen, over the uterus and the baby, to try to get the baby to turn. During the version, your blood pressure and heart rate are checked. Ultrasound is used to monitor the baby's heart rate and position. Your doctor will tell you if the baby has changed positions.

After the Version

The fetal monitor will remain in place for at least 2 hours to check the baby's heart rate and the activity of your uterus. If you had an epidural, the nurse will observe for the effects to wear off prior to you going home. You will not be able to eat or drink anything during this recovery time. Once you are ready to go home, the IV and the fetal monitor are removed. The nurse reviews your discharge guidelines. You must have someone with you to drive you home.

At Home

The pain medicine given during the version may affect your judgment and reflexes. You may feel groggy. Do not drive or operate machinery until the next day. Unless you are otherwise instructed, you may resume your regular diet, routine medicine and normal activities. Be sure to follow-up with your scheduled doctor or midwife appointment.

When to Call the Doctor

Contact your doctor or midwife right away if you note any of the following:

- Regular contractions at least 5 minutes apart for 1 hour.
- Vaginal bleeding.
- Your baby is less active than normal.
- Leaking of fluid from the vagina.

Follow-Up

More than half of attempts at version succeed. However, even if the procedure works at first, there's still a chance that the baby will turn back around to the breech position. Your doctor will discuss your care if this should occur.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the 3rd floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the 1st floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

Northwestern Memorial is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes, respects and serves with dignity all people and does not discriminate, including in hiring, or employment, or admission, or access to, or treatment in its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, disability, handicap, age, Vietnam or other veteran status, sexual orientation or any other status protected by relevant law. To arrange for TDD/TTY, auxiliary aids and foreign language interpretation services, call the Patient Representative department at 312-926-3112, TDD number 312-926-6363. Issues related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should be directed to the director of Employee Relations or designee at 312-926-7297.

Developed by: Labor and Delivery Nursing Unit

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.

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