

## Is It a Labor Contraction? | Kaiser Permanente

[Music]

So your uterus is a big muscle, and periodically you can have these contractions or spasms that occur. It is the timing, the frequency and the intensity of the contractions that will determine if labor will progress.

So if you're trying to figure out if you're contracting, what's most important is to listen to whether or not it's happening in a rhythmic fashion. Sometimes they begin with just the uterus tightening down, and it feels like you have a basketball in your tummy. Other times it may start at the front of your uterus and run backwards. Sometimes it starts in the back and feels like it's running forwards.

They don't go away if you sit down. They don't go away if you have some glass of water or take a bath. You can start timing them.

When you're having contractions that are coming every five minutes for an entire hour and it's consistent during that hour, then you should start to come in. Now, if it's your second or your third baby, sometimes you might be further along when you hit those contractions every five minutes for an hour.

So if it's your second or your third baby and you're starting to have contractions that are more intense and they're coming even every seven

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minutes for an hour, you should probably start to come in and get your cervix checked.

[End of recording]