

# Understanding

## BRAXTON HICKS CONTRACTIONS

Definition:

Braxton Hicks contractions are the intermittent tightening of your abdomen.

Your uterus is contracting to prepare for birth.



### WHAT DO THEY FEEL LIKE?

They don't cause labor or signify that labor is starting. It feels like the muscles of your belly are tight, and your uterus feels hard. It is uncomfortable, but they shouldn't be painful.

They last about 30 seconds.



### WHEN DO THEY HAPPEN?

They occur early on, but you most likely won't feel them until the second trimester.

However, prelabor occurs when your body is preparing for labor during late pregnancy.

The contractions may occur every 10-20 minutes at this stage.



### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE & TRUE LABOR CONTRACTIONS?

-Braxton Hicks are irregular, last 30 seconds, and usually stop if you go for a walk.

-True labor contractions are regular and start getting closer together, last 30-70 seconds, and can get stronger if you walk.



### WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE DURING THEM?

Try lying down, going for a walk, taking a warm bath, getting a massage.

### CALL YOUR DOCTOR OR MIDWIFE IF:

YOU EXPERIENCE PAIN, THE CONTRACTIONS ARE REGULAR, STRONGER, AND CLOSER TOGETHER, OR FLUID IS LEAKING FROM YOUR VAGINA.