



A World of Confident Women Choosing Normal Birth

Teaching Strategies: Labor Begins on Its Own

I. Learning Activity: Induction Cards

Copy the pages with the possible reasons for induction onto colored cardstock and cut the cards with a paper cutter.

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a newsprint pad, a copy of the handout *ACOG Medical Indications for Induction*, some masking tape, a marker, and a set of the cards with possible reasons to induce. Have the group divide a page of the newsprint pad into two columns – “Medical Reasons” and “Elective Reasons.” Have them discuss the reasons for induction on the cards and then decide whether to tape each card onto the “Medical Reason” or “Elective Reason” column. Then ask them to brainstorm what other interventions may be required with an induction and write the list of those interventions on another piece of newsprint.

Eventually the masking tape can damage the cards. You may want to cover the cards with clear contact paper or you can:

- Have students line up the cards on the floor in two columns – “Medical Reasons” and “Elective Reasons.”
- Make velcro boards and have small velcro strips on the back of the cards. If you do this, you may want to have just two groups – pregnant women and their partners.

Have each group display their pages. Discuss any differences between the groups and the interventions that may be required with an induction.

II. Top Ten Reasons to Induce

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a newsprint pad and marker. Give them a designated number of minutes and ask them to come up with the “Top Ten Reasons to Induce Labor.” Have each group present their list to the whole group. Consider giving small prizes to the group that has the most medical indications for induction, to the group that has the most outrageous reasons for induction, etc.

III. Storytelling

Tell a story such as one of the following:

The Induction Butterfly created by Teri Shilling (from *Staying Energized*)

Tell the story of how caterpillars spend most of their days crawling around eating leaves. Somehow, and we don’t know why, they know when it’s time to build their cocoon – and then they know when it’s time to come out. As a child we might have come upon a cocoon with a butterfly almost ready to come out.

We might have heard a loud noise from the beating of wings against the side of the cocoon – as children and not knowing better, we might have been tempted to “help” the butterfly out; but we all know now that butterflies who are “helped out” early have a much tougher time. It’s part of an important process that they beat their wings against the side of the cocoon, to remove some moisture from their wings. If they are “helped out” of their cocoon before they have a chance to do this, sometimes the butterflies are unable to fly. And humans are similar to butterflies, unless there is a medical reason, it’s best to wait until the baby is ready to be born. It’s tempting to help butterflies out and our birth statistics show it’s tempting to help babies out early – but babies and butterflies do best when they do it without intervention/induction.

You can illustrate the story with a toy caterpillar that you can transform into a butterfly as you tell the story. Look for one at your local toy store or you can get one from Passion for Birth, www.passionforbirth.com.

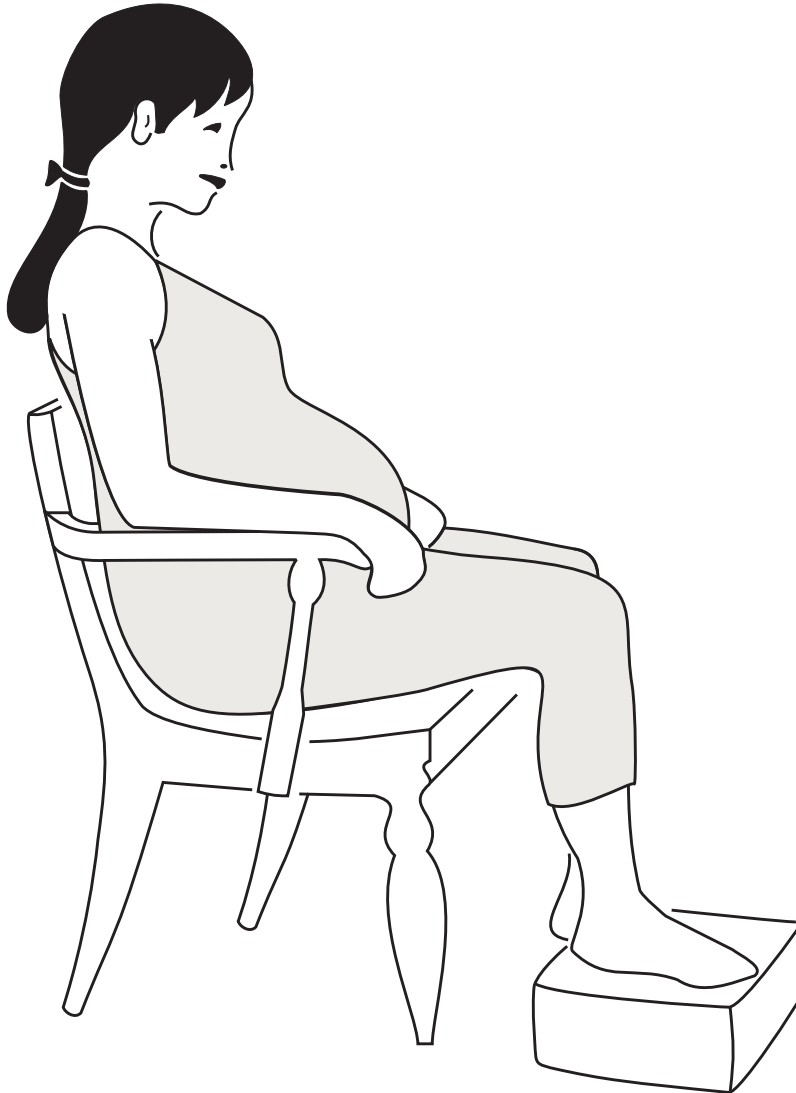
The Sea Turtle created by Ann Tumblin

Sea Turtle Story: A sea turtle will lay a nest of up to 150 eggs on the beach where she was hatched. She does not return. But the turtle doulas (or turtle project workers) protect the nests since sea turtles are threatened. After about 60 days gestation the turtles hatch inside the nest under the sand and get ready to emerge from the nest after dark when their predators are asleep. One day a woman walking along a beach saw a baby sea turtle with its nose sticking out of the sand. Deciding to help this turtle, the woman carried it to the water. She noticed lots of birds arriving and when she turned around, she saw all the baby turtles following the lead turtle she picked up. The birds were swooping and eating the baby turtles.

You can illustrate this story with a toy sea turtle.

Thinking About Labor Induction

This pregnant woman is having her labor induced. Draw or write in other interventions that may be required.
Also draw in or write in comfort measures that may help her to cope.





ACOG Medical Indications for Induction

1. Your water's broken.
2. Your pregnancy is postdate (more than 42 weeks).
3. You have high blood pressure caused by your pregnancy.
4. You have health problems such as diabetes or lung disease that could harm your baby.
5. You have chorioamnionitis (an infection in the uterus).

Indications taken directly from *Planning Your Pregnancy and Birth* by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), 2000.



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**39 Weeks
Pregnant**



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**40 Weeks
Pregnant**



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**41 Weeks
Pregnant**



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**42 Weeks
Pregnant**



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**Bag of waters
broken for
2 hours**



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**Bag of waters
broken for
12 hours**



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**Pregnant woman's
blood pressure
is elevated**



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**Pregnant woman
has an infection
in uterus**



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**Grandmother wants
to be present at birth**



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**Want baby to be
born under a certain
astrological sign**



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**Want baby born
on father's birthday**



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**Maternity leave
clock ticking...**



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**Want baby to be
born during the day
shift on a weekday**



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**Postpartum help
available now**



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**Favorite care
provider is on call**



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**Want to avoid
giving birth on
a major holiday**



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**December 31st
(tax deduction)**



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**Suspected
large baby**



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**Pregnant woman
has heart condition**



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**Miserable, tired of
being pregnant!**