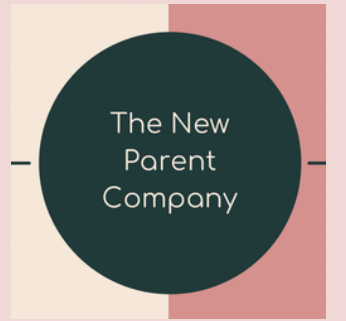


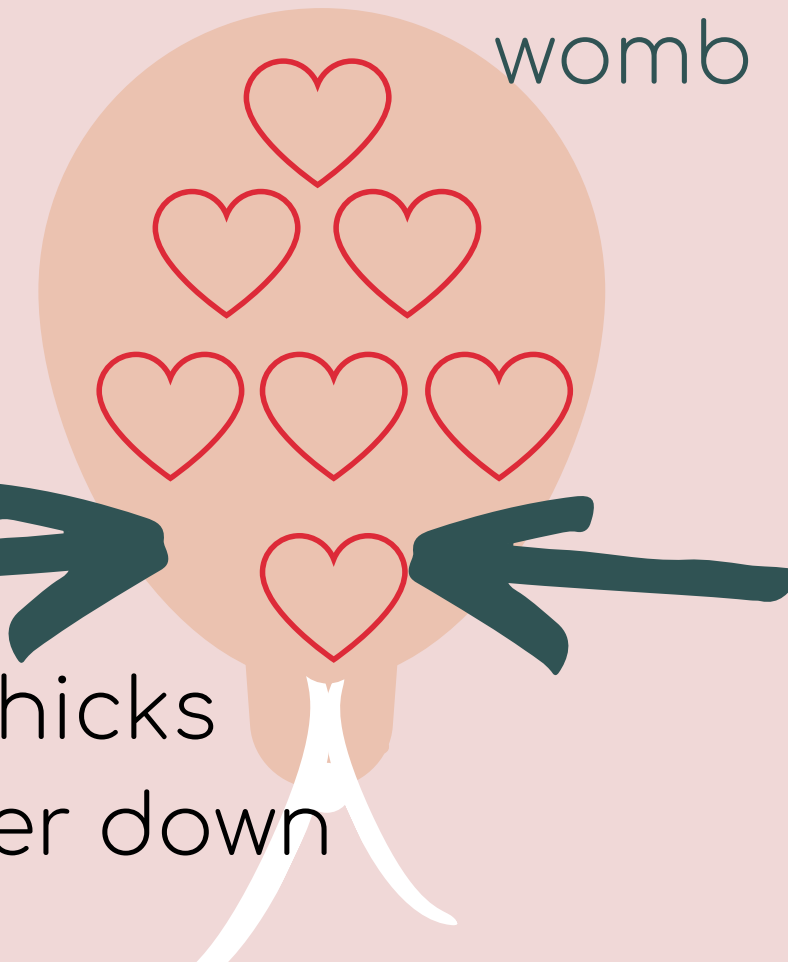
# Braxton Hicks

- Practise contractions, begin in early pregnancy but not everyone is even aware of them
- Braxton hicks can start from 28 weeks - its normal, they are irregular and last between 5 - 40 seconds
- They don't dilate the cervix
- Hard to tell the difference sometimes but generally theres no pattern and they usually stop with a change of activity or a drink of water!
- More common when hot or when you're dehydrated
- Braxton hicks are creating oxytocin receptors in your uterus



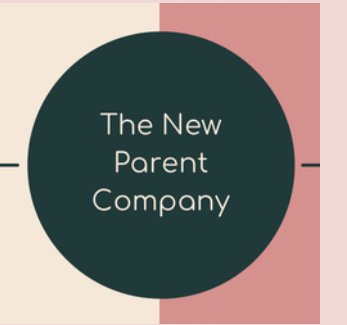
 Oxytocin made by mum and baby

 oxytocin receptors



Braxton hicks  
are felt lower down

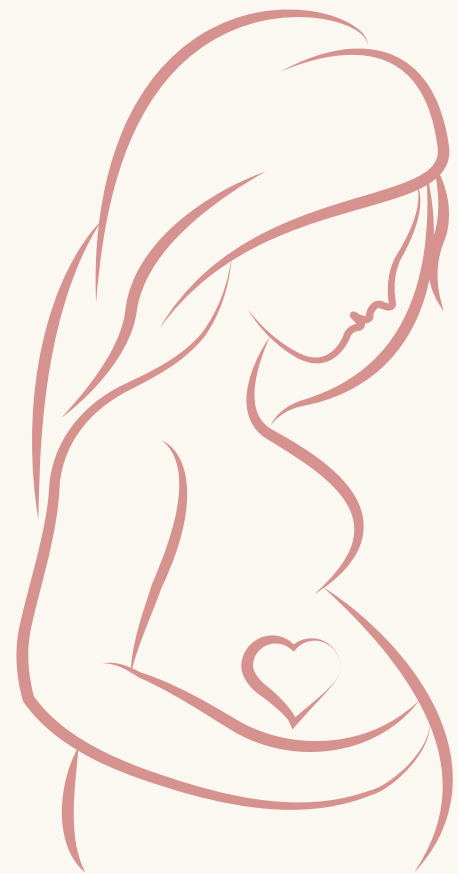
# Signs Your Body Knows What It's Doing



Excessive nesting

Light spotting

Mucus plug (can be 2-3 weeks before labour) can regenerate



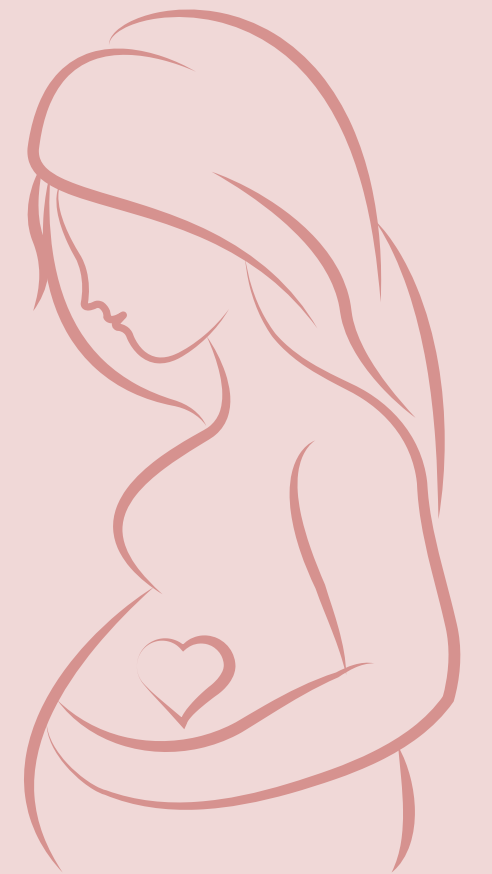
Intuition

Nauseous (clear out)

Tightening & pulling sensations/cramping - universal - practice wave breathing

Waters releasing - call to let them know

Diarrhoea (clear out)



# What to do during early labour



- Likely to be able to continue as normal including eating, leaving the house if you want, sleeping if it's night time.
  - Most important to consider oxytocin, positioning (being upright forward and open as much as you can), and fuelling your body with food, drink, and sleep in case things take a while.
  - Could potentially stop and start but consider this an opportunity to rest in-between. Labours like this will often end up being fairly quick once things ramp up.
  - Try and enjoy yourself, the last opportunity with your family as it is, before the new addition.
- Watch or listen to something funny on a birth ball, rest in an upright position, bake, do some final nesting bits to keep you busy, meet with friends, go out for lunch.
  - If during the night consider letting partner rest to save their energy for later, leaves you in a bubble without as much focus on the time passing.
  - Try to avoid timing your surges at this point as engaging your neocortex (thinking brain) can increase adrenaline and slow them down, creating stress and then slowing it further.
  - Showers, baths, massage, TENS machine, and breathing techniques are all useful for staying comfortable during this time.