

Water, Water, Everywhere!

I have heard the statement hundreds of times, “I think my water broke”. It is such a strange and foreign idea, it can easily become confusing to know what it will look, feel, smell, and behave like. In all honesty, most women don’t experience their water breaking before the onset of labor begins (this term is called SPROM spontaneous and premature rupture of membranes – your water breaking on its own before contractions had a chance to start).

Still, it does happen on occasion. If you think that your water may have broken, this is a good way to know if what you are experiencing might, in fact, be your water breaking, or something less exciting. ☺

	Amniotic Fluid	Vaginal Discharge	Urine
Color	Usually colorless or faintly pink. May have streaks of mucousy blood in it. If it is dark brown, dark green, or port (red), it may be a result of meconium (bowel movement) or blood**	Clear, slightly pink, milky or creamy white or yellow. If yellow or thick/curdled, you may have an infection	Anywhere from bright yellow or yellowish green (depending on diet) to pale yellow/colorless
Smell	Heavy, earthy, slightly sweet. Some say it smells briny, like ocean water or saline solution, others say it smells faintly maple	Mostly odorless, slightly sweet. If it smells bad, you may have an infection	Ammonia scent, strong or faint
How it Happened	May happen suddenly or slowly. Will happen regardless of position and will come out even if clenching the Kegel muscle. May be first noticed when rising in the morning but will continue after that time	Comes out immediately after moving from a sitting or lying position into an upright position	Will usually not come out when clenching the Kegel muscle
Frequency of Discharge	Once the sac has released, the water will continue to leave the sac. It can come in drips every few minutes, small gushes when baby moves or when you have mild contractions, or a steady trickle	Only happens one time in any significant amount of time. Usually in the morning, when first rising, may also be after bathing or having intercourse	Usually only happens once. Sometimes with a sneeze, cough, or laugh. Other times, simply from moving a certain way at the waist or hips

** If it is brown, green, or red, call your provider immediately

If your water has broken:

- put nothing foreign in your vagina unless you are checking your own dilation or checking for the cord, in which case wash your hands thoroughly before hand and wash your vulva afterward
- wear a heavy pad OR sit on towels/chux pads
- Change underwear/pads often
- Garlic, Vit C, and Vit E can help protect you against infection at this time
- Studies show that bathwater does not enter the vagina, so bathe at your own discretion
- Wipe front to back
- Remain upright to encourage baby to come down lower
- Keep track of baby’s movements with a chart
- Drink lots of water – your amniotic fluid continuously replenishes itself as long as you stay hydrated
- Call your doula!