

Welcome to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

A Note to NICU Parents

Parents of babies in the NICU often wonder what they can do for their new baby. They also worry about how fragile the baby is. Although premature babies seem too small for many things, they are actually quite good at giving us messages about themselves. By learning how to recognize when your baby needs help and then knowing some ways to calm your baby, you can reduce your own, as well as your baby's stress level.

When you arrive at your baby's bedside, take some time (at least a minute) to just watch your baby. Talk to the nurse and see what type of day your baby has been having. If your baby is sleeping comfortably, just watch the baby rest without handling. If your baby is restless and cannot settle without help, check with nursing staff and then offer your baby some assistance. Your baby really benefits from your presence, your touch and gentle voice in NICU.

We hope that you have found this information helpful. Please do not hesitate to ask any of the nurses or physicians about anything that is unclear or confusing to you.

- When your baby does not require intensive care, the Pediatrician may transfer him/her to 3E which is the Pediatric Unit. This is a great opportunity for one or both parents to stay with the baby. There is a bed and washroom in each room.
- In preparation for discharge, a car seat test is performed on most babies to ensure a safe trip home. You will be asked to supply the actual car seat that you will be using for your baby. Please familiarize yourself with the operating instructions that come with your car seat.
- If your baby is going home on medications and/or vitamins, you will be given information and instructions on administration.
- The Community Health Nurse will contact you to arrange for a home visit.



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Congratulations!



Welcome to NICU (Neonatal/ Newborn Intensive Care Unit). This can be an anxious time for you and your family. We hope that your stay with us will be as pleasant as possible.

Babies in our NICU receive treatment for many different conditions. Our team of physicians and nurses will be available to talk to you about your baby's specific treatment requirements. Medical information about a baby's progress will be given only to the parents. We encourage parents to stay and help care for their babies. Parents are partners in care, and as such, have access to their baby 24 hours a day.

Visiting Guidelines

The number of people welcomed at the bedside will be determined with the parents to meet the needs of the infant, family and NICU.

Due to limited space and our babies with special needs, we have developed some guidelines for visitors:

- At times, we may need to limit the number of visitors (check with your nurse).
- All visitors must be accompanied by the parent of the baby.

- Visitors are not to come into the NICU if they have a fever, or symptoms of an acute illness. These include cold, cough, flu, diarrhea, vomiting, earaches, rashes or a cold sore.
- Exposure to any communicable disease also means you should not visit the NICU. If you are unsure, please check with the nurse.
- The baby's brothers and sisters (siblings), are the only children allowed into the NICU.
- Siblings will be screened for symptoms of illness and exposure to communicable diseases.

Infection Control for Parents and Visitors

HANDWASHING is the best way to prevent the spread of germs. We ask that you wash your hands every time you enter the nursery (please use the sink just inside the NICU door). Instructions for proper handwashing are posted at the sink.



It is also necessary to wash your hands after:

- changing your baby's diaper.
- Handling any electronic devices, such as cell phones.
- Handling any objects outside the baby's area of care, such as purses.
- If unsure ask your nurse.

For Your Information

- NICU has a supply of sleepers and blankets that you are welcome to use. Should you choose to bring in clothes, please make sure they are labelled. You will be responsible for laundering personal clothing items. Despite our best efforts, clothing can still be lost. 
- You may take photographs/videos of your baby. To respect the privacy of others, only take photographs of your baby/family. We understand that you are curious about your surroundings, but we are unable to give information about other babies and their families.
- A hospital Social Worker is available to discuss practical and emotional concerns you may have.
- The hospital Chaplain is also available at your request.
- Please use cellular phones quietly. Conversations and ringing phones can be disturbing to babies and to other families.
- Baby Saver and CPR courses are offered in the Community. Please see our pamphlets for further information.