

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Contents

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Welcome                                | 2    |
| Contacting the unit                    | 2    |
| Visiting                               | 2    |
| What to bring for your baby            | 4    |
| Breastfeeding                          | 5    |
| Daily routine on the ward              | 6    |
| Facilities on the unit                 | 6    |
| Staff on the unit                      | 7    |
| Care your baby will have               | 7    |
| Support for parents                    | 10   |
| How we use information about your baby | 10   |
| The Neonatal Network                   | 11   |
| Going home from the unit               | 11   |

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Welcome

The neonatal unit staff would like to welcome you and your baby to the neonatal unit. Our neonatal unit cares for small and sick babies.

If your baby has come to this neonatal unit from another hospital, you may find that some of the practices are done slightly differently. Please do not worry about this and if you have any concerns, please speak to your baby's nurse or doctor.

Soon after your baby is admitted to the neonatal unit, we will show you around the unit and the facilities that we have.

### Contacting the unit

You can contact the neonatal unit at any time of the day or night for an update on your baby. We will only ever give information to the parents over the phone:

ITU – 0121 507 5106

Low dependency (cot nursery) – 0121 507 5092

Little Cot Nursery – 0121 507 6459

### Visiting

Please do not visit if you have a cold, cough or a tummy bug (diarrhoea and vomiting) as this puts your baby at risk of infection. Only two visitors are allowed at your baby's cot side at any one time, but family members can change over and wait in the children's play room.

We encourage parents, your baby's siblings and grandparents to visit; however, no other visitors are allowed:

### Parents

Parents can visit their baby at any time. You may be asked to leave the bed space unit at nursing handover times. At this time you are welcome to wait in the play room for coffee/tea until nursing hand over is completed. This is for confidentiality reasons. These occur at 7.30am and 7.30pm and last approximately 30 minutes.

### Brothers and sisters

Siblings can also visit at any time but must be accompanied by a parent. It is important that siblings can visit their new brother or sister.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Grandparents

Grandparents can visit from 1pm to 7pm but must be accompanied by one of the baby's parents.

### Religious contacts

If you would like a religious leader or one of our hospital chaplains to visit your baby, please speak to the nurse looking after your baby as the visit will need to be arranged by the hospital, and one of the baby's parents will need to be present. In extreme circumstances, if a parent is unable to visit, they can request a visit from a religious leader if the time is critical, but this would only happen under the supervision of staff.

### Car Parking

The main visitor car park can be accessed from Dudley Road and Western Road. There is no charge for the first 15 minutes after which charges apply, including for blue badge holders. Parents can buy reduced rate car park tickets. In order to buy these tickets, parents will need to request a form from the nurse in charge. Once you have filled in the form, please bring it to the Birmingham Treatment Centre (BTC) reception to buy the tickets. You will need to pay a deposit, but you will get the money back later on. If you receive certain benefits and bring proof of this, you can claim reimbursement of your bus fare from the BTC reception or the Cash Office in the main hospital, or get a token to allow free exit from the hospital car park from the BTC reception.

### Disabled access

Disabled parking bays are available.

### Public transport

The 80, 82, 83, 87 and 89 buses stop on Dudley Road. Ask for City Hospital when you board. When travelling from Birmingham city centre, get off at the stop opposite the main hospital and cross at the crossing. The 11A and 11C (Outer Circle) buses stop in Aberdeen Street next to the hospital.

For more public transport information, please see:  
[networkwestmidlands.com](http://networkwestmidlands.com) or call Traveline 0871 200 2233.

### Food outlets

You can find different food outlets within the hospital: Arches Café is open Monday to Sunday, 8am to 9pm, Birmingham Treatment Centre Costa Coffee is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Cash point

A cash point is available in the main corridor near the front of the main hospital entrance and near Arches Café.

### Reducing the risk of infection

Before entering the neonatal unit, please remove your coat and place it in the locker provided. To lock the lockers, you need a £1 coin and will get it back when leaving the unit.

Always wash your hands before touching your baby, before and after changing nappies and before feeding baby.

### Security

You cannot get onto the neonatal unit unless you press the buzzer and speak to the staff to gain access. Please do not allow anyone to follow you into the unit.

When your baby comes out of the incubator and goes into a cot, we will put a security tag on your baby's leg which will alarm if anybody tries to take them from the unit.

### What to bring for your baby

To begin with, please bring the following items in for your baby:

- nappies
- cotton wool balls
- nappy sacks
- olive oil (used to relieve dry skin)

You can bring nappy creams if you wish, but we would only advise this if your baby has a sore bottom.

### Clothes

If you would like to bring your baby's own clothes in, please write their name inside and tell the nurse who is looking after your baby, so that they can put a notice up to say that the clothes are their own. You will need to take these home to wash regularly. Please do not bring in expensive items as sometimes clothes get lost.

### Toys

If you would like to bring a toy in for your baby please bring in just one small toy that has been washed, or a plastic toy which can be wiped easily.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Taking photos

Please feel free to take photographs of your baby. When your baby is admitted the nurses will take a photograph of your baby to give to mum. We discourage our visitors from taking photos and videos of staff members without their consent.

### Holding your baby

As soon as it is possible the nurses will help you hold your baby. You may feel frightened and think that you might hurt your baby. Do not be worried, even very small babies are tough and it helps them a lot if they are held by their parents. You will always remember the first time you hold your baby as it is a very special time, so do not forget to take lots of photographs of the event.

### Breastfeeding

Breast feeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby especially when they are born sick or early. You will be shown how to express your milk at least eight times per day including one expression during the night. On the neonatal unit you can express next to your baby (screens are provided) or there is a private room where you can do this.

Each time you express you will need to use a new bottle, which should be labelled with your baby's name and the time and date it was expressed. The bottle should be kept in the back of the fridge at home and then brought into the unit in a cool bag and given to the nurse who is looking after your baby. If milk cannot be brought in within 48 hours, it should be frozen at home and brought in frozen.

Breast pumps are available on the unit for all mums to use. Mums who are booked to have their baby at City Hospital may be able to hire a pump from the unit to use at home free of charge. This should be returned when your baby is discharged. If you are booked to have your baby at another hospital, our nursing staff will help you to obtain a pump from them.

The unit also has a breastfeeding advisor and nurses can also give you support with this by: All staff are trained to give you support with feeding and expressing. You can also contact the hospital infant feeding team on 07816061633 (Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm) for advice and support.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Daily routine on the ward

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| 7.30am     | The day nursing team come on duty and the night nurses will update them on how your baby has been overnight. During the day your baby is fed, cared for, given any medicines they may need, given fluids and will have any necessary investigations done. |
| 9.30am     | Doctors see all babies and plan their care. If you want to speak to the senior doctor, this is a good time to see them.   |
| 1pm–2pm    | Quiet time: the lights will be turned out, the curtains will be closed and the babies will not be disturbed for an hour.  |
| 1pm - 7 pm | Grandparents can visit (until 7pm).   |
| 4.30pm     | Doctors visit all babies again in the intensive care area and review their condition.   |
| 7.30pm     | The night nursing team come on duty and the day nurses will update them on how your baby has been during the day.   |

### Facilities on the unit

#### Children's play room

There is a children's play room on the neonatal unit for the use of the baby's brothers and sisters. The toys are cleaned by our staff once a week but please ensure you tidy the toys after use.

#### Food and drink

There is a small kitchenette on the neonatal unit with facilities to make tea, coffee and cold drinks as well as a fridge to store cold snacks brought in from home. There are no facilities for heating or cooking food. The kitchen is cleaned daily, but please leave it clean and tidy. Please do not bring any food or drinks into the clinical areas.

There are several food outlets at City Hospital which are open at various times; please ask your baby's nurse for more information. There are also several food outlets and a supermarket just a short walk from the hospital, on Dudley Road.

#### Accommodation

Four bedrooms are available on the unit to accommodate parents. Priority will be given to parents of the sickest babies and those close to going home. However, if you want to stay the night to be close to your baby speak to your nurse to see if a room is available.

There is no other accommodation on site for parents but there are various hotels in the local area which can be found on the internet.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

When a mother is staying in the family room she will be given a voucher for a complementary breakfast, lunch and dinner from the hospital canteen.

### Interpreting

If English is not your first language we can arrange for an interpreter to come to the unit or speak to you over the phone (with the interpretation service) when we need to give you important information about your baby.

## Parent groups

### Teaching sessions

The neonatal nurses run teaching sessions twice a month on a Saturday or Sunday where parents and other family members who will be involved in your baby's care can learn about all aspects of your baby's care, prevention of cot death and basic newborn baby resuscitation. If you would like to attend, tell the nurse looking after your baby and he/she will book a place for you.

## Staff on the unit

Whilst on the neonatal unit, your baby will be cared for by doctors, consultants and nurses.

There are approximately 80 nurses who work on the unit, and there can be up to ten working on any single shift. The nurses are organised into teams and you will be told which team is looking after your baby. You can ask the nurse from your baby's team for any information you need.

If you would like to speak to your baby's doctor, you can do this during the morning ward round or ask your baby's nurse to arrange a time when you can speak to them privately.

### Meet the matron/ward manager and consultant

The neonatal unit matron/ward manager oversees the smooth running of the unit. Every other week an open meeting is held with the neonatal unit matron/ward manager and consultant where you can discuss any issues you have. If you have any problems, this is the best time to get them sorted out.

## Your baby's care

The care planned for your baby will be discussed with you and recorded in your baby's care plan folder, which is kept near their incubator/cot. The nursing team will also encourage you to get involved in caring for your baby; don't feel that you can't do anything for your baby because they are small or unwell.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### How you can help

You will be taught how to change your baby's nappy, clean them, care for their mouth, take their temperature, change the oxygen probe, dress your baby, give their medicines and feed them by tube, breastfeeding or alternative methods. These things are known as a baby's 'cares'.

You will become very skilled in all aspects of your baby's care and we will record your progress in the family-centred nursing care plan. After a while, you can arrange with your baby's nurse that their cares are left until you come in so that you can do them.

### Pain relief for your baby

Babies feel pain just like adults, especially if they are having painful procedures. Your baby will be given pain relief through their drip if needed. If your baby does not have a drip they can be given breast milk before a painful procedure to relieve the pain. Sucrose can be used as an alternative to breast milk as it has the same effect. If you are worried about your baby feeling pain please discuss this with their nurse. You can find more information about pain relief for your baby in the "Bliss Parent Information Guide" which you will have been given.

### Giving consent for tests and treatments

When your baby is first admitted to the neonatal unit, you will be informed of routine procedures in case your baby needs these.

However, if your baby needs other specialised tests or treatments the doctors will talk to you about these before they are done. If a procedure needs to be done urgently in an emergency and the doctors feel it is in the best interests of your baby, they will go ahead with the procedure without waiting to talk to you about it first. If you have any concerns about this, please speak to your baby's doctor.

You will be given some information leaflets when your baby is first admitted to the unit which will explain some of these procedures, and further leaflets about certain treatments will be given to you if needed.

### Development care

On the neonatal unit we practice developmental care, which is a special way to look after babies. It involves nursing them in 'nests' so they are able to push their arms and legs against a barrier which helps their development. We also keep their environment dark and quiet by covering the incubators, keeping the curtains shut and keeping noise to a minimum during 'quiet time' which we have every afternoon. As part of developmental care we also encourage you to cuddle your baby. If you would like further information about this, please ask the nurses caring for your baby.



# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### The equipment used in the neonatal unit

Your baby may be nursed with some special equipment which may look very complicated and frightening. Your baby's nurse will explain what all of the equipment does and what the wires and tubes are for and you will be given some information leaflets explaining these further. The equipment, wires and tubes will be removed from your baby as soon as they are no longer needed.

### Medicines

Some babies will be given medicines to help them recover. Your baby's doctor or nurse will explain what each of these medicines are for. Babies are not given medicines unless it is absolutely necessary.

### Weighing baby

Your baby will be weighed every Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, but some babies need to be weighed every day. Their weight will be recorded on a weight chart which is kept in the green folder with the care plan. The weight is calculated in kilograms and if you ask your nurse they will convert it to pounds and ounces. Do not worry if your baby does not gain weight every time they are weighed, sometimes they can take a little longer to gain weight especially if they have been very poorly.

### Testing for infection

Once a week, all of the babies are tested for certain infections. This involves taking a stool specimen and a swab of their skin. The results are available in two to three days; if you would like to know the results please speak to your baby's nurse.

### Eye exams

If your baby is born early or is small, they are at risk of having problems with their eyes. These babies will have weekly eye examinations by a specialist eye doctor from the Eye Centre until the doctor is happy that there are no problems. If you want to speak to the eye doctor please ask your baby's nurse to arrange this.

### Hearing test

Your baby may be given a hearing screen a few days before they are set to go home. The hearing screen is completed by a hearing screener. There's very little discomfort experienced by the baby and results will be given over the phone to mum.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### How we use and keep information about your baby

When your baby is admitted to the neonatal unit, their details will be added to the neonatal unit database. The only people that have access to this information are the neonatal team and no information about your baby will be given to anyone else without your permission. This is why we will ask you to leave your baby's cot side when other babies are being discussed.

If you or your family are known to social services the nurse will speak to them about your baby; this is routine. If we have any social concerns about your baby we will also contact social services. This is done for the protection and wellbeing of your baby and the nurse will inform you of this.

### Care plan

Your baby's care plan will be kept near their incubator or cot. This contains information about what care is planned for your baby and what care or treatment has been given. It also contains your baby's discharge care plan. You are encouraged to read the care plan each day to get a thorough update on your baby's care, and the nurse can explain anything you don't understand. Once the nurse has discussed the care plans with you, she will ask you to sign in the admission form.

### Red books

All babies will be issued with a red book which is their child personal health record. The red book contains lots of useful information about child development and information about your baby will be added to it by the neonatal team. Please take time to read the book, but do not take it home as the nurses need to check it each day.

The book will be kept with your baby, and will be sent home with your baby when they are discharged.

### The Neonatal network

City Hospital Neonatal Unit is part of the South West Midlands Neonatal Network. It works with other neonatal units in the region so that babies can be moved to the unit in order to provide the most appropriate and specialised care for them. Sometimes babies need to be moved from City Hospital to another hospital because they need a treatment or specialist care that can't be provided at City, or because there isn't a cot available. Babies are only moved if it is absolutely necessary.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Moving to another hospital

If your baby needs to be transferred to another hospital they will be taken in a transport incubator by a highly skilled team including doctors and nurses. You will be given information about the unit your baby is being transferred to and how to get there.

If your baby has to be moved to another hospital for special treatment, they will be brought back to City Hospital as soon as they are well enough and the treatment has finished.

### Going home from the unit

We never keep a baby on the neonatal unit for longer than necessary and always aim to get them home as soon as possible (or back to their mother if she is still in hospital). It is difficult to predict the amount of time a baby will need to spend on the unit before being ready to go home. If a baby is born early, they are sometimes ready to go home a couple of weeks before or after the date they were due.

Before your baby is able to go home they will need to be feeding well, maintaining a normal body temperature whilst nursed in a cot, gaining weight and the doctors will need to be happy that the problems have resolved. You will need to register your baby with your own GP before your baby can go home.

You will also need to have done the necessary preparation to make sure you can bring your baby home to a safe environment; unless everything is ready at home you will not be able to take your baby home. If your baby needs any medicines at home you will be taught how to give them.

# Welcome to the Neonatal Unit

Information and advice for parents and carers

## Neonatal

### Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites [www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk), follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs](https://www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs).

### Sources used for the information in this leaflet

- Department of Health, 'Toolkit for high quality neonatal services', 2009
- Parents Of Premature babies Project Family, 'A summary of research results and recommendations', 2009
- Southern West Midlands Newborn Network, 'The use of sucrose for procedural pain', June 2011

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5303 or email: [swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net](mailto:swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net)



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