Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Management at Home

Information and advice for patients

Neonatal Community Outreach Team

This leaflet explains how we will provide treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in your own home.

To enable safe delivery of NAS treatment within the home environment, the Neonatal Community Outreach Team (NCOT) team will facilitate training for families/carers when appropriate. Neonatal staff are also trained to deliver this education to families/carers to support holistic and timely coaching and guidance.

What is Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Management at Home?

If baby needs a longer than expected course of treatment for their NAS we will consider providing that care in your own home. Before we do that, we need to be confident that baby can control their temperature, they are feeding without any difficulty and there has been no increase in signs/symptoms of withdrawal.

Providing baby does not require any other special care, the medical team will assess baby before making the decision to transfer care to your home. You will be transferred home with the correct medication to continue treatment at home.

Before you go home, you will have a discharge planning meeting with all the healthcare professionals involved in baby's care. They will plan for your baby to go home on treatment for NAS.

We will also:

- Discuss medication treatment at home and what this involves for you as a family at home.
- Provide you with all the necessary equipment and training.
- Ensure your competencies are completed and you fully understand the care delivery and safety that is required for home NAS treatment. This will include your Basic Life Support training and discuss how to reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Deaths), all-inclusive within the STORK programme.

The criteria for going home with pharmacological treatment are:

- Baby is in a cot and maintaining their own temperature.
- Bottle fed babies need to be using their own bottles.
- Baby weighs at least 1.6 kg and is greater than 34 weeks at the time of discharge.

- Weaned to 30 micrograms/kg of morphine sulfate prior to discharge and NAS scoring has not increased over the preceding 24-hour period.
- The infant should be orally feeding well, passing urine and stools and no vomiting/ diarrhoea with appropriate weight gain.
- The infant should otherwise be healthy and meet the criteria for discharge from hospital/ NCOT.
- There should not be any safeguarding concerns which preclude the safe provision of NAS management in the home setting without additional external supervision.
- Carer that is allocated/named is not a parent who is currently receiving medication for substance misuse.
- Infant will not be discharged to a home where someone is receiving treatment for substance misuse.
- Carer/s have completed competencies and STORK/BLS programme.
- Locked box within the home for medication, if applicable, for foster carers only as per child's services guidance.

The Neonatal Outreach Team will:

- Discuss with you baby's plan before you go home.
- Provide you with all the necessary equipment for home.
- Visit you daily to support you in the gradual weaning of medication.
- Weigh baby at least weekly.
- Liaise with baby's Paediatrician to discuss progress.

Once at home baby will begin to reduce their withdrawal scoring and wean from their medication.

The NCOT will give you guidance as to when and how this is done when they visit.

How will the withdrawal be monitored?

When baby is on treatment, we will come to your home every day and do our own assessments to ensure baby is comfortable and if we can start to wean their medication. If the scoring is rising using medication and non-pharmacological care, then we may need to consider increasing their medication or a readmission to the hospital for further assessment. Our team will let you know when treatment can be stopped.

How will you monitor baby at home?

We will empower and educate you to care for baby at home and assess their symptoms using a score chart, whilst being aware of the non-pharmacological care you can deliver in the home environment. The ideal temperature to be maintained by baby is 36.5 – 37.3°C and you can check that yourselves with a thermometer and feeing baby's chest to ensure they do not feel too warm/cool. Babies can sometimes develop loose poos/regurgitation while receiving treatment and this will also need monitoring, alongside their feeding regime. Please let the nursing team know and ensure baby is having good feeds and having 6 or more wet nappies within 24 hours.

Accidental Overdose

In the event a morphine sulfate overdose occurs the carer/family must call an ambulance and take the baby to hospital for a full assessment. Throughout the structured competency training the carer/family will be reminded of the importance of medication administration and what to do in such event:

- Call an ambulance.
- Inform NCOT (in working hours) or medical team (out of working hours).
- Inform named social worker/social services team involved. Make a note of the amount of drug administered to the infant and when this was administered.

Contact us

Neonatal Outreach Team 7 days a week, excluding bank holidays 8am – 5pm

Mobile: 07870384017

SWB Neonatal Unit: 0121 507 5100 (Ring the Neonatal Unit during Out of hours)

Please do not leave a message if it is an emergency. If you require urgent advice outside of NCOT working hours, then please take your baby to A&E. For non-urgent advice outside NCOT hours, please refer to your Open Access letter or to your GP.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust (2023). *Neonatal abstinence syndrome management at home*. Birmingham: Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust. Available at: **https://connect2.swbh.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Neonatal-Abstinence-Syndrome-Management-at-Home.pdf?x52846** (Accessed: 15 August 2023).

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust (2021) *NCOT standard operations policy*. Birmingham: Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust. Available at: **https://connect2.swbh.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NCOT-SOP.docx?x52846** (Accessed: 15 August 2023).

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust (2021) *NCOT Lone worker guideline*. Birmingham: Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust. Available at: **https://connect2.swbh.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NCOT-Lone-worker-Guideline.docx?x52846** (Accessed: 15 August 2023).

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