



NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU) INFORMATION FOR PARENTS



Welcome to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Your baby is in the NICU because he/she needs special care. This brochure will provide information to help make the journey through the NICU a little easier and answer some of the questions that you might have.

VISITING HOURS:

PARENTS:

06:00 to 06:50

08:00 to 18:30

19:30 to 21:00

There will be times when you will be asked to leave the unit. This is done to ensure the privacy of the NICU babies and reduce the risk of infection. Grandparents will be allowed one visit during the baby's stay.

To ensure the security of our babies, the door to the NICU will be locked. Please ring the bell and we will answer as soon as possible.

INFORMATION

Please consult directly with the nurse caring for your baby with respect to information regarding your baby's medical status and associated healthcare. You are welcome to call the unit, but please note that information will only be given to parents. Please try not to call during nurse shift handover period: 06:50 - 07:30 or 18:50 - 19:30.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones must be switched to silent mode. All cell phone calls must be undertaken outside the unit.

PHOTOS

Parents are welcome to take photographs of their babies. No photographs of other babies or the unit are allowed.

INFECTION PREVENTION

To protect our babies from infection, we ask that you wash your hands as you enter the unit and use the alcohol hand spray available at each baby's bedside. Please do not touch or handle other babies.

Drawings and photographs can be placed at the bedside.

No flowers, balloons, or food and drink will be permitted into the unit.

You can bring a cap (beanies) and booties/socks for your baby, either new or washed at home.

HANDLING YOUR BABY

Discuss the handling of your baby with the nurse taking care of him/her. Initially, it might only be possible to touch the baby lightly with your hands or do hand cupping. You can at all times talk to your baby, read or sing to him/her. As the condition improves, you can start participating in care as guided by your baby's attending nurse.

KANGAROO MOTHER CARE

WHAT IS KANGAROO MOTHER CARE (KMC)?

KMC is the process of initiating skin-to-skin contact between you and your newborn.

When your baby is ready for KMC, the nurse will advise you on what to wear. Baby will be dressed in a nappy and cap and placed on your bare chest, to allow for maximum skin-to-skin contact. KMC has many benefits for the baby, including calming of the baby and increased weight gain.

FEEDING BABY

Breastmilk is the preferred food for babies. Initially, your baby might not be able to breastfeed but will receive his/her milk through a small tube called a nasogastric tube. Information on expressing and storing breast milk for your baby will be provided.

NAPPIES

Premature babies need special nappies. These will be provided by the hospital, but please note that these nappies are generally not covered by your medical aid. Parents can provide disposable nappies of their choice for full-term babies.

REGISTRATION

Remember to register the birth of your baby at the Department of Home Affairs (within 30 days of the birth) as well as on your medical aid (as soon as possible).

REFERENCES:

Baby First Neonatal Intensive Care Unit - NICU (Online).

<https://www.babyfirst.com/en/.../your-baby-neonatal-intensive-care-unit.php>
(Accessed 5 August 2015)

Gosnell Family Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (Online).

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/neonatology>
(Accessed 5 August 2015)

Gardner, S et al. 2011. Merenstein & Gardner's Handbook of Neonatal Intensive Care. 7th Edition. St. Louis, Missouri. Mosby Elsevier.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit - NICU (Online).

<https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/parents-and-visitors/coming-hospital/ward-and-admission-information/neonatal-intensive-care-unit/nicu>
(Accessed 5 August 2015)