

Keeping in Touch

When you are not on the unit and you are at home, or if you are self-isolating, the Neonatal Team will do as much as possible to keep in touch with you. Please ring at any time to check on your baby's progress. The Unit Team will also use phone and video links wherever possible to enable you to see your baby and ask any questions.

Discharge Home

When your baby is ready to go home, we may refer him/her to the Community Team if any further support is required. Your Health Visitor will also make contact with you soon after your discharge. When you arrive home, please continue to follow the Government advice and stay at home. As tempting as it may be, please do not have any visitors and continue with the strict social distancing, this is to protect you and your baby. If you or your baby require any medical help do not hesitate to contact your GP or 111. Please do not miss your baby's vaccination appointments as these are important for the long term health of your baby. The vaccination clinics will ensure strict hygiene and social distancing and these will be kept separate from any patients who may be affected by Covid-19.

National guidance from Public Health England states that babies should not wear face masks as this may increase the risk of suffocation. It is therefore important that no face covering is purchased, or adapted for use, for any Newborn baby or young child.



This information leaflet was designed and produced by the East Midlands Neonatal Operational Delivery Network.

For further information on what we do, please visit our website; www.emnodn.nhs.uk



COVID-19

Pandemic

Parent Information

August 2020

We realise that the Covid-19 pandemic is a worrying time for you, particularly if your baby requires admission to a neonatal unit. The Covid-19 virus is a new virus and evidence so far indicates that the Newborn baby is less likely to be affected than the adult population. Please be assured that the teams within the neonatal services across the East Midlands will be endeavouring to ensure that neonatal services continue as usual, and that the babies in our care are protected from the risk of infection at all times.

Admission

If your baby requires admission to a Neonatal Unit, the process for admission will continue as normal. If there are no available cots in the Neonatal Unit, or your baby requires a higher level of care, then your baby will be moved to the next nearest unit which provides the level of care that your baby requires. This is normal practice within a Neonatal Network and is a process that the staff are all very familiar with. If your baby needs to be moved, the team will ensure that he/she is transferred back to your local unit as soon as he/she is well enough

Transport

The Neonatal Network has a dedicated transport team (CenTre) to move any babies who need to be transferred to another unit. The team are highly skilled in transporting premature and sick babies. They will keep you updated throughout the process and will inform you when they have arrived at the new unit. At the present time, you will not be able to travel with your baby and will need to follow on using your own transport. If you still require medical care yourself, then every effort will be made to transfer your care to the same hospital. In this instance you will be transferred by ambulance.

In Utero Transfers

There are occasions where you may need to be transferred during pregnancy so that your baby can be cared for in a unit which is best suited to your baby's needs when it is born. This may be because the baby will be born very premature or due to issues which have been identified during the pregnancy. This service will be unaffected during the Covid-19 pandemic

Parent Access

In order to prevent spread of infection, access to neonatal units across the country has been reduced. However, please be assured that parents will continue to have access to the units in order to spend time with their babies, and to learn how to provide care for them. The clinical teams across the Network have agreed that both parents will be able to have access to the unit.

Whether parents can visit together or separately may vary between units depending upon individual Trust policies and the ability to maintain social distancing within the unit. These policies will be in place to protect you and your baby. Please ensure that you wash your hands thoroughly when you enter the unit following the Government guidance. If social distancing within the unit is difficult, then you may be asked to wear a face covering. The nursing team will be able to advise you about this. When visiting the hospital we would request that you remain on the unit until it is time to go home and that you do not visit any shops or coffee shops within the hospital grounds. This is to prevent you inadvertently coming into contact with anyone who maybe infected. Tea and coffee is available on the unit for parents when you require a drink. Please note that during this difficult time, siblings are not permitted to visit, again this is to reduce the risk of infection.

While you are at home

Premature and sick babies are vulnerable and at the present time, it is not known how significant the risk of infection from Covid-19 is in the Newborn. In order to minimise any risk, we would ask that you follow strict social distancing practices and do not mix with anyone from outside of your home. If possible, ask family members to collect any shopping for you and leave it at the door. Please follow Government guidance and stay at home at all times when you are not visiting the hospital and follow strict hygiene practices. However, if you need any medical assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your GP or call 111.

If you are unwell

Due to the fact that babies are vulnerable to infection, neonatal units would ordinarily always request that you stay away if you are unwell. During the pandemic this is even more important than ever. Please follow the Government guidance if you develop any symptoms of coronavirus (visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus). Do not leave your home and do not visit the neonatal unit. We realise that this is extremely upsetting and will ensure that we keep you updated on your baby's progress, and will utilise phone and video links wherever possible so that you can see your baby while you are at home

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

You will have seen a great deal on the news about PPE. While you are on the Neonatal Unit you will see nursing and medical staff in masks, gowns and other items of PPE. Please do not be alarmed by this, this is to ensure that your baby, the staff and all parents are protected and kept safe. Some units may ask you to wear a facemask while you are visiting; again this is for your own safety and that of your baby.