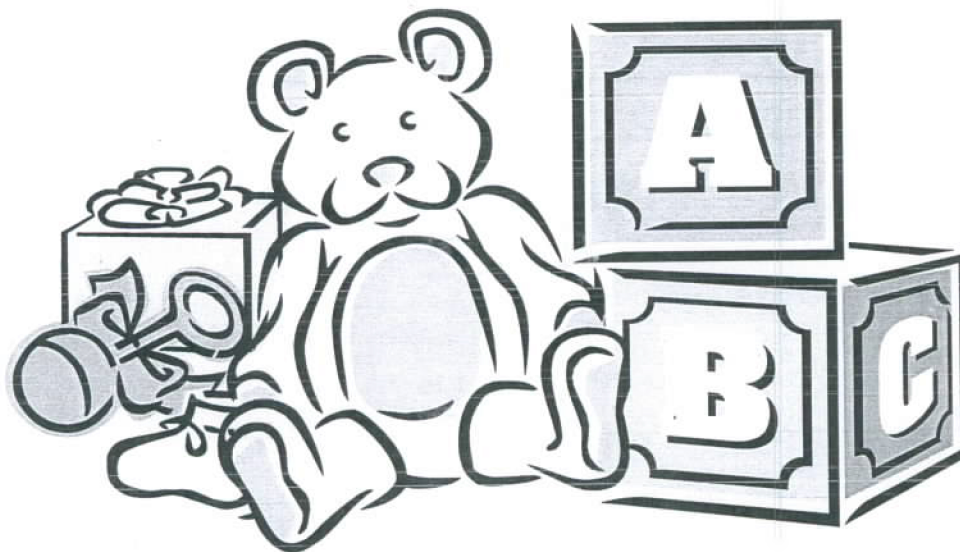


YOUR VERY SPECIAL BABY!

A Parent Guide To The Special Care Nurseries



Dear Family,

I know this isn't how we planned to start my life. This is a scary time for you, watching, standing by, feeling helpless. But problems after birth are not as uncommon as you think.

When you walk into the Special Care Nurseries (SCN), you're probably overwhelmed by the wires, machines, tubes, monitors, alarms and all kinds of other noises. But underneath all that, in the big bed is your precious little baby: ME!

You may feel like you are going through all this alone, but you're not. The doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals are here to help you. They are specially trained to take care of my needs as well as yours. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Even if you think the question is dumb, it isn't dumb if you don't know or don't understand. Write your questions down as you think of them – this will help you focus more on my care. The nurses can answer your questions about my general care and condition. The doctors prefer to answer specific medical questions.

The SCN staff will take good care of me while I am here. But remember, I need *you*, too. You are my parents and I love you best. Please talk to me. I may look fragile, but I love to be talked to and touched at certain times. This helps me feel more secure because I remember and recognize the voices that were around me before I was born.

Last but not least, you should know that babies like me who require special care may not go home from the hospital when Mom does. This is probably going to be a very difficult thing for you, but you need some time to rest and take it easy, both mentally and physically. I'm planning on coming home as soon as the doctor gives me my *car* traveling papers. I'll need you to be ready to take care of me when that time comes.

Until then, please think good thoughts. And remember that I love you!



Your Very Special Baby



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general information



NURSERY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Parents are encouraged to call at any time. The SCN staff is happy to update you on the general condition of your baby. Specific information concerning your baby (lab results, ventilator settings, etc.) can be obtained from the neonatologist during his/her daily rounds. (This information is given to the parents only.)

NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU): 404-605-2390

INTERMEDIATE CARE NURSERY: 404-605-3651; 404-605-3652

VISITATION INFORMATION:



We do not consider parents visitors, and we welcome you to visit as much as possible. However, due to the busy nature of the Special Care Nurseries, specific times have been set aside for you to spend quality time with your baby. These times are listed on the Special Care Nursery Visitation Sheet in the back pocket of this booklet.



We ask that the number of visitors with your baby be limited to two at a time.



Grandparents are encouraged to visit at any time without the parents present. All other visitors must be accompanied by one parent.



The Special Care Nursery staff encourages parents to bring the baby's siblings. No children under age 12 are allowed to visit unless they are the baby's siblings. Siblings under age 12 may visit after completing a screening process for possible infection prior to each visit. Please have this process completed at the scrub sink area before entering the Intermediate Care Nursery or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. However, before the first visit, please take time to talk with your children about their new baby brother/sister. You may also take pictures to share with them.



Prior to all visits, please call ahead to be sure the unit will be open to parents and visitors, especially if you must drive a long distance to the Hospital.



All parents, siblings and other visitors are required to wash hands for three minutes prior to entering the SCN. The scrub sink and scrub sponges (or soap) are located outside the SCN.



To respect the privacy of each baby and his family, we ask that you visit with your baby only. Please do not ask questions or visit other babies. Specific information regarding a baby's condition is given only to the baby's parents.



Time spent with your baby is very precious. For this reason, we ask that all cell phones be turned off while you are visiting your baby. If you need to use your phone, please step out into the waiting area. Beepers should be turned to the vibration mode.



A free parking card is located in the back pocket of this binder for your use during your baby's stay in the SCN. Only one card is available per family.

PHOTOGRAPHS :

Cameras and camcorders are welcome in the nursery. You may take as many pictures as you like of your baby, but please do not take pictures of other babies.

TOYS :

You may bring in small, clean toys for your baby, such as stuffed animals, machine-washable items, non-heirloom items and nonbreakable items.

CLOTHING :

When your baby is ready to wear clothing, your nurse will let you know so that you may bring in clothing. Your baby's outfits should be washed with a gentle detergent before the first use and between each use. Clothing should be labeled with your baby's first and last name.

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people you may come
in contact with in the special care
nurseries



| people you may come
in contact with
in the
special care nurseries

As the parent of a baby in the Special Care Nurseries, you will come in contact with many healthcare professionals who are specially licensed and trained to take care of your baby's needs. These may include:

LACTATION CONSULTANT

A nurse or healthcare provider who specializes in breastfeeding and can assist with breastfeeding needs – such as expressing, pumping and storing expressed breast milk (EBM), and breastfeeding techniques (when your baby is ready to nurse).

NEONATOLOGIST

A board-certified physician who specializes in the treatment of critically ill newborn and premature babies.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)

The occupational therapist's role is to evaluate your baby for things that may slow development. In the nursery, the occupational therapist, along with a physical therapist, will look closely at your baby's muscle control, muscle tone, reflexes and positioning, and how these all work with your baby's response to stressful situations. The OT uses this information to educate your family and other staff about caring for your baby during daily activities.

PATIENT CARE MANAGER

A Patient Care Manager is available to meet your baby's and family's physical, emotional, social and financial needs. He/she will provide resources that will help you through this experience.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST (PT)

The physical therapist works closely with the OT, observing your baby's movements. He/she notes subtle changes in neuromuscular control and coordination, intervening as needed. The PT can determine dysfunction in muscle tone and movement, which may be the first indicator of developmental delays.

people you may come
in contact with
in the
special care nurseries



REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

A registered nurse will be caring for your baby at all times during his Hospital stay. Your baby's nurse works with the neonatologist, respiratory therapist and other staff members to provide total patient care to your baby. He/she also provides emotional and spiritual support to you and your family.

RESPIRATORY THERAPIST (RRT)

The respiratory therapist works with the nurses to ensure that your baby's breathing needs are met. The RRT is expert at handling the ventilators and other equipment that support your baby's breathing.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST (SLP)

The speech-language pathologist offers expertise in your baby's oral motor function (movement of the tongue and jaw), and how it affects the development of sucking and swallowing. An SLP is available to offer suggestions for helping your baby become successful at taking a bottle and/or breastfeeding, and identifying problems in development of oral motor skills, feeding and language.

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while you wait



As the parent of a baby in the SCN, you are forced to make adjustments that you may not feel ready to make. Feelings of helplessness, anger, depression and frustration are quite common. The SCN staff is here to support you through this difficult time.

Following is a list of other resources available to you:

LIBRARY

The Nicholas E. Davies Community Health Resource Center contains resource books and information on premature babies and the neonatal intensive care unit. It is located within the Sauls Memorial Library on the first floor of the 77 Building at Piedmont Hospital. The Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday; holiday hours may differ. You are welcome to visit the Library and browse the collection, or call the Davies Center at 404-605-2303 and request to have information sent to you.

NICU VIDEO

An informative NICU video is available for parents of Special Care Nursery babies. Ask your baby's nurse or the Patient Care Manager for further information.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Preemie Parent Support Groups are available for parents with premature babies. Ongoing support from parents who have had babies in the Special Care Nurseries is also available. Contact information is available from the SCN staff.

GUEST CENTER

The Piedmont Hospital Guest Center provides lodging for families of inpatients. Located on the fourth floor of the 1984 Building, the Center is a convenient place for parents to stay on a short-term basis while their baby is in the SCN. A nominal fee is charged for a Guest Center room.

PREEMIE PARENT ROOM

A room is available for parents of special-needs babies to rest and express breast milk while visiting the SCN. You may also spend the night there with your baby, prior to discharge, as needed.



PASTORAL CARE

A Hospital chaplain is available to address the emotional and spiritual needs of you and your family during this difficult time.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS

You may find the following guidelines helpful:



As soon as possible following the birth of your baby, verify with the Hospital Admissions Department or Hospital financial counselor that the Hospital has your current address, phone number and insurance information. Dial "0" for the Hospital operator or call **404-605-5000** to contact either department.



Immediately notify your insurance company of your baby's birth. By law, you have 30 days to add the baby to your policy – however, contacting your insurance company as soon as possible will ensure that your baby is added to your policy in a timely manner.



The Hospital will send a Confirmation of Birth Letter to your home, which may be required by your insurance company or your employer to add your baby to your insurance policy.



During your baby's hospitalization, a Hospital financial counselor and a Patient Care Manager are available to discuss insurance and financial concerns with you.



If you do not have health insurance, the Hospital financial counselor and Patient Care Manager can help you access community and government financial programs, including Medicaid. Medicaid is a federal program available through the Department of Family and Children's Services that provides healthcare benefits and services to families based on medical and financial need.



Your baby may also be eligible for Social Security benefits through the Social Security Administration. This program is available for babies weighing less than 1200 grams (2 pounds, 10 ounces) at birth, babies diagnosed as small for gestational age, or babies with a condition that may affect development or function. An application process is required. Contact the Social Security Administration at **800-772-1213** or the Patient Care Manager for further information.



Be sure to keep accurate records regarding your financial and insurance contacts.

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**common procedures
and equipment**



Entering the Special Care Nurseries for the first time can be overwhelming. Feel free to ask the nursery staff any questions regarding equipment and procedures.

Following is an overview of the most common things you may see. An explanation of other terms is in the back section of this booklet.

NICU BED

A special "open" bed that allows easy access to your baby for various procedures during the first few days of life. Although your baby is not dressed (except for a diaper) or wrapped in blankets while on the NICU bed, his body is kept warm by the warmer above him. A probe is attached to his belly, then to the warmer bed, to keep his body temperature stable.

ISOLETTE (OR INCUBATOR)

An enclosed heated bed with clear plastic walls that provides a quiet, dark place for premature babies to eat, sleep and grow. Premature babies are usually put into isolettes when they are a few days old.

MONITORS

One of the most important machines in the SCN is the cardiorespiratory monitor or heart rate/apnea monitor. This monitor, which looks like a computer screen, tracks your baby's vital signs, such as heart rate, breathing, oxygen level and blood pressure. This information is gathered from three wires or "leads" placed on your baby's chest and stomach. Another single cable with a soft clip-like probe is placed on your baby's hand or foot. You will hear many different "alarms" from the monitors that the SCN staff will explain to you. Sometimes alarms may go off just from your baby's movements. Remember to focus on your baby, not on the monitors.

JAUNDICE AND PHOTOTHERAPY

Many babies (term and pre-term) develop a yellow coloring of the skin, called jaundice, within the first few weeks of life. Some amount of jaundice is normal. To determine if your baby needs to be treated for jaundice, a blood test called a bilirubin level will be drawn from your baby. If the bilirubin level is high, your baby will receive a treatment called phototherapy, in which a bright blue light is placed directly over (and sometimes under) your baby's body to help reduce the bilirubin. While under phototherapy, your baby's eyes will be covered and he will be clothed in only a diaper. Your baby may spend a few days under these blue lights until the bilirubin level has decreased. Bilirubin levels are usually checked daily.