



W I C

Provided through your local county health department, this program offers assistance with food and nutrition education for pregnant women, babies and children up to age five. Breast pumps are also available through this program. Level of income and family size determines eligibility. Contact your local county health department for further information.

D O W N S Y N D R O M E A S S O C I A T I O N O F A T L A N T A

A local program that offers supportive and educational services for families of babies diagnosed with Down Syndrome. 404-320-3233.

P A R E N T T O P A R E N T

A statewide network of parents providing emotional support and information for parents of children with all types of medical problems. Especially helpful for parents whose babies are hospitalized with chronic illness, or if long-term problems are anticipated. 770-451-5484 or 800-229-2038.

F O C U S ( F A M I L I E S O F C H I L D R E N U N D E R S T R E S S )

A nonprofit organization to help families cope with the emotional, physical and financial strains they face as a result of a child's illness or disability. 770-234-9111 or [www.focus-ga.org](http://www.focus-ga.org).

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE SPECIAL CARE NURSERIES AT PIEDMONT HOSPITAL

corrected developmental age



A baby is considered pre-term if he is born earlier than 37 weeks' gestation. During a normal pregnancy, your baby grows in the womb for 37 to 42 weeks (nine months).

With a premature baby, it is important to adjust your expectations about his behavior and abilities. An age difference of a few weeks or months is more significant with an infant than it is with a toddler. For instance, a three-month-old is very different developmentally than a six-month old, while the difference in the developmental stage of a 26-month-old toddler is less noticeable than in a 29-month-old. Consequently, a pre-term baby's age is called his "adjusted" or "corrected" age – the age he would be if he were born at the end of a full-term (40-week) pregnancy, rather than several weeks before. Your baby's corrected age provides a more accurate indicator of his stage of development. It is recommended that you use the corrected age for the first 24 to 30 months of your baby's life.

#### CALCULATING YOUR BABY'S CORRECTED AGE

To calculate your baby's corrected age, subtract from his current age (the number of weeks or months since birth) from the number of weeks or months he was born premature:

$$\text{ACTUAL AGE} - \text{NUMBER OF WEEKS OR MONTHS PREMATURE} = \text{CORRECTED AGE}$$

For example, if your baby is 12 weeks old but was born 4 weeks early, his corrected age is 8 weeks old.

Actual/current age: 12 weeks

Minus weeks/months premature: 4 weeks

Equals Corrected Age: 8 weeks

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**the first 24 hours at home**



Your first day home after discharge can be stressful as you take over your baby's total care. Here are some suggestions to help you adjust to your new role:



Feed your baby in a quiet room with indirect lighting. Babies born prematurely are extra sensitive to sound and light.



Limit visitors.



Hold your baby close to your body, supporting his head and neck.



Limit talking and avoid interruptions during feedings. This will help your baby focus on feeding without being distracted.



Feeding is a learned experience, a process that takes time. Expect feedings to be tiring and slow for your baby.



A premature baby awakens often and has irregular sleep patterns. This can mean waking and crying every two or three hours until they are four months' Corrected Age. Expect that your baby will not sleep longer than a few hours at a time until six to eight months' Corrected Age.



During the first 24 hours at home, your baby may sleep, cry or become restless more than usual – this is the result of a change in environment. Expect this to last from a few days to a week.



If your baby is increasingly fussy or irritable, play a radio or TV at low volume. Remember, your baby will need time to adjust to a quiet home environment after being in a noisy nursery environment.



Help your baby soothe and calm himself by gently cradling or holding his hands and feet together. Offer a finger or pacifier to soothe his need to suck. Wrap your baby snugly in a blanket warmed in the dryer. Remember to keep his hands free, to allow him to calm himself.



Establish regular routines, such as bathing and playing.



Learn your baby's cues for his need for rest or comfort.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE SPECIAL CARE NURSERIES AT PIEDMONT HOSPITAL

terms you will hear  
in the special care nurseries



#### ALADDIN

A type of CPAP.

#### ALVEOLI

Tiny sacs in the lungs where oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged in the bloodstream.

#### ANEMIA

When the percentage of red blood cells decrease below a certain level. Red blood cells are responsible for carrying oxygen to the body tissues. This condition is sometimes treated with a blood transfusion.

#### ANTIBIOTICS

Medicines that can help fight a bacterial infection.

#### ANTIBODIES

Proteins produced by the body that help fight against foreign substances.

#### APNEA

Short periods of time when a baby (usually premature) stops breathing.

#### APGAR SCORE

A score given to a baby at birth to assess clinical condition at delivery.

#### ASPIRATE/ASPIRATION

To inhale foreign material into the lungs (i.e., meconium, formula, oral secretions, medications, etc.).

#### BACTERIA

A microorganism that can cause infection in the body.

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BAGGING

A rubber bag attached to a mask that is placed over the baby's face to help him breathe. The bag is connected to an endotracheal tube (see page 33) and is squeezed to push air or oxygen in and out of the baby's lungs.

BILIRUBIN

A product in the bloodstream that comes from the breakdown of red blood cells and can cause a yellowish coloring (jaundice) of the skin.

BLOOD CHEMISTRIES

Measurements of various products in the blood, such as sodium, potassium, sugar and bilirubin.

BLOOD GASES

A blood sample that determines the amount of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the blood. Blood gases help estimate how well the heart and lungs are functioning.

BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

Used to treat anemia (see "Common Procedures and Equipment," page 8).

BRADYCARDIA

Low heart rate (often present in premature babies).

BPD (BRONCHOPULMONARY DYSPLASIA)

A lung condition occurring in very small premature babies that requires prolonged treatment with oxygen and/or a breathing machine.

CARDIOLOGIST

A physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of heart disorders.





CBG (CAPILLARY BLOOD GAS)

The process of obtaining a blood sample by pricking the baby's heel (see "Heel Stick," page 35).

CC (CUBIC CENTIMETER)

A unit of measure for fluid. Thirty (30) ccs equal one fluid ounce. Also called a milliliter (ml).

CPAP (CONTINUOUS POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE)

A method of keeping a small amount of pressure in a baby's lungs to keep the air sacs open, allowing the baby to breathe more easily on his own.

CAT SCAN (CT SCAN)

A radiological test to confirm or rule out the presence of abnormalities in different parts of the body.

CM (CENTIMETER)

A unit of measure, usually for length or circumference. One inch equals 2.54 centimeters.

CPT (CHEST PHYSIOTHERAPY)

A method of lightly patting the baby's chest wall and back to help loosen and break up mucus in the lungs and improve breathing.

CENTRAL LINE

An intravenous line surgically inserted in a vein of the chest and threaded into the right side of the heart to provide I.V. nutrition and/or medications.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

Referring to the brain and spinal cord.

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CHEST TUBE

A plastic tube inserted through the chest wall into a space between the ribs. The tube is then connected to a suction system to remove excess air that has accumulated in the space around the lungs.

COLOSTRUM

Breast milk produced the first few days of life that is rich in antibodies and nutrients.

CONGENITAL

A disorder or disease existing at birth that was acquired during development in the uterus, not through heredity – i.e., a congenital heart defect.

CONTINUOUS FEEDING

A type of tube feeding wherein a small amount of feedings are given by a special pump on a continuous basis.

CYANOSIS

A bluish or grayish skin color caused by poor circulation or low oxygen concentration in the bloodstream.

DISTENDED ABDOMEN

A full, tight appearance of the baby's stomach.

EBM

Expressed Breast Milk.

ECHO (ECHOCARDIOGRAM)

A noninvasive test (does not hurt the baby) involving placing a gel on the baby's chest and moving a micro camera over the area of the heart. This micro camera takes motion pictures of the heart and aids in the diagnosis of heart defects.



#### E D E M A

Excessive fluid in the body tissues.

#### E K G / E C G ( E L E C T R O C A R D I O G R A M )

A test that measures and traces the electrical current produced by the action of the heart muscle, indicating whether the muscle is beating normally.

#### E L E C T R O D E

An adhesive patch placed on the baby's chest that connects him to the cardiorespiratory monitor to measure signals from the heart and lungs. Also called a lead.

#### E E G ( E L E C T R O E N C E P H A L O G R A M )

A test that measures and traces the brain's electrical activity.

#### E L E C T R O L Y T E S

One of a set of blood chemistries that includes the sodium, potassium and chloride concentration in the blood.

#### E T T ( E N D O T R A C H E A L T U B E )

A plastic tube that is passed through the mouth and into the trachea (windpipe). A ventilator is then connected to the tube to help the baby breathe by giving air or oxygen directly into the lungs.

#### E Y E E X A M

Whenever a baby receives oxygen over a period of time, there is a chance that some change may occur in the blood vessels of the eyes. If your baby was very premature and/or received a significant amount of oxygen while in the Special Care Nurseries, his eyes will be checked by an ophthalmologist (eye doctor).

#### E X T U B A T I O N

The removal of the ET tube when the baby no longer requires the help of a ventilator.

terms you will hear  
in the  
special care nurseries



F I O 2

Fraction of Inspired Oxygen. The air that we breathe is a mixture of several gases, including nitrogen, oxygen and carbon dioxide. Oxygen occupies a certain percentage of the mixture of these gases. The percentage may range from 21 to 100 percent oxygen.

F U L L T E R M

A baby born between 37 and 42 weeks' gestation.

G A S T R O E N T E R O L O G I S T

A physician who specializes in stomach, liver and intestinal problems.

G A V A G E F E E D I N G O R T U B E F E E D I N G

A method of feeding the baby formula or expressed milk by inserting a small plastic tube through the mouth or nose into the stomach and allowing the fluid to flow into the baby's stomach by gravity or a special pump.

G E N E T I C I S T

A physician who specializes in the field of genetics (heredity).

G E S T A T I O N A L A G E

A baby's age in weeks from time of conception until birth.

G L U C O S E

A type of sugar that circulates in the blood and is used as the body's source of energy.

G R A M

A unit to measure weight. 454 grams equals one pound.



### GRUNTING

The sound a baby makes when he exhales (breathes out), signifying that he is having trouble breathing.

### HEART RATE

A baby's heart rate is usually 100 to 160 beats per minute.

### HEEL STICK

A small stick to the baby's heel to obtain blood for testing; similar to finger sticks in adults.

### HEMATOCRIT

A measurement of the proportion of red blood cells in the blood that helps the physician determine when the baby needs a blood transfusion.

### HEMATOLOGIST

A doctor who specializes in the study of blood.

### HEMOCULT

A test to check the presence of blood in the stool.

### HUMAN MILK FORTIFIER

A nutrient supplement added to breast milk to meet the special needs of the premature baby.

### HMD (HYALINE MEMBRANE DISEASE)

A respiratory disorder, mainly in premature babies, that causes the tiny air sacs in their lungs to collapse due to surfactant deficiency. Also called RDS (respiratory distress syndrome).

terms you will hear  
in the  
special care nurseries



HYPERAL (HYPERALIMENTATION FLUID)

A solution of sugar water (glucose), protein (amino acids) and added vitamins given intravenously to help the baby grow and gain weight; usually given when the baby cannot receive formula or EBM by mouth.

HYPERGLYCEMIA

An abnormally high glucose level in the blood.

HYPOGLYCEMIA

An abnormally low glucose level in the blood.

INCUBATOR OR ISOLETTE

An enclosed, heated bed.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE SPECIALIST

A physician who specializes in the treatment of infections.

IMV (INTERMITTENT MANDATORY VENTILATION)

The number of breaths a ventilator will give the baby in one minute.

I.V. (INTRAVENOUS)

A small plastic catheter placed into a vein in the scalp, arm or leg to provide fluid, calories and/or medication.

IVH (INTRAVENTRICULAR HEMORRHAGE)

Bleeding into the ventricles (chambers) of the brain. The amount of bleeding is graded from I (one – less severe) to IV (four – most severe).

IMED PUMP

A special pump that delivers I.V. solutions, medications, feedings and other fluids at a set amount per hour.



#### INTAKE

A record of all fluids being placed into the baby's body.

#### INTUBATE

The insertion of an ET tube through the baby's mouth and into the trachea (windpipe) when the baby requires the help of a ventilator to breathe.

#### ISOLATION

A procedure involving special handling of babies who may have infections, to prevent the potential spread of infection from patient to patient.

#### JAUNDICE

A yellow color of the skin caused by too much bilirubin in the blood (see page 30).

#### KILOGRAM (KG)

A unit of measure, usually for weight. 1 kg equals 2 lbs., 3 oz.

#### LIPIDS

Milky white intravenous fluids that provide fat for nutrition.

#### MRI (MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING)

A magnetic machine that provides better imaging of soft body tissue than a CT scan or ultrasound.

#### MECONIUM

Dark-green material present in the intestines at birth; the first stool the baby passes.

#### MONITOR

A machine that tracks and indicates the baby's heart rate and breathing rate at all times. This information is transmitted to the monitor via electrical impulses through electrodes placed on the baby's chest, arms and legs.