

Welcome to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Abbotsford Regional Hospital
and Cancer Centre



Your baby: _____

Your baby's doctor: _____

NICU Direct Line: 604-851-4981



Congratulations on your new baby!

We are dedicated to giving the best care to you and your baby.

We hope this booklet helps you become more familiar with our unit. We understand this might be a stressful time for you and your family.

Visiting

Parents are not visitors!! You are welcome in the NICU 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Visitors are welcome. There is a limit of 2 people at a bedside at a time, as the space is small and it is important to keep the unit quiet for all babies.

We welcome baby's siblings of all ages. To protect your baby, your other children should have their childhood immunizations up to date. All other visitors need to be 13 years old, or older.

While you are with your baby, a volunteer might be able to stay with your other children for a short time. Your baby's nurse can help arrange this.

If you wish family and friends to visit *when you are not here*, please ask your baby's nurse to add their names to your list of approved visitors.

You are welcome to bring an unbreakable water bottle with you.

To make and take phone calls, please go outside the NICU. This helps control the noise in the NICU.

Health screening

All babies, especially premature babies, are vulnerable to illness (can easily get sick). We ask all parents, siblings, and visitors to complete a health screening form each day.

If you are feeling unwell, are sick or have an infection, please do not visit.

Privacy and confidentiality

Please let your family and friends know that we only give information about your baby's condition to parents.

We ask that you only use your cell phone in the NICU to take photos. Photos should be limited to your baby, family, visitors and the immediate bedside. Please do not take photos of other babies, parents, visitors, or staff in the background.

Clean hands protect baby

Keeping your hands clean is the best way to reduce the spread of germs and protect your baby from infections.



Please wash your hands at the sink for at least 30 seconds **every time you enter** the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Wash your hands at the sink or clean your hands with hand sanitizer at all of these times:

- when entering the NICU
- before and after touching baby
- after changing a diaper
- before handling food or drinks
- after touching objects such as your cell phone or other electronic devices
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- before leaving the NICU



Germs hide. It is best not to have artificial nails and nail polish. For the best handwashing results:

- Remove your coat.
- Push up your sleeves.
- Remove hand and wrist jewelry such as watches and rings.

Cell phones and other electronic devices

Keeping the NICU quiet and calm helps babies heal and grow. Also, many babies in the NICU are sensitive to light and noise. For these reasons, it is best to do the following:

- Keep electronic devices on silent.
- Put electronic devices at a low volume if they cannot be on silent.

Electronic devices can be a source of germs. The best way to prevent spreading germs to your baby is to wash your hands after touching a device and before touching your baby. Other ways to prevent spreading germs include all of the following:

- Wipe your devices with a disinfectant wipe.
- Try not to touch your devices when you visit the NICU, especially when holding or touching your baby.

Taking part in your baby's care

You are an important part of your baby's care team. We hope you spend as much time as possible with your baby.

Your baby's nurse can show you different ways to care for your baby. This might include changing their diaper, taking their temperature, taking part in the daily meeting with baby's healthcare team, and more.

Also, we invite you to hold your baby skin-to-skin as often as possible. The longer you hold your baby skin-to-skin, the better for the baby.



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Parent room

We have parent rooms for parents to share from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. You can bring in food and use the microwave, fridge, and kettle. Please label your food and take it home every day.

You can reserve a parent room to sleep in at night by speaking to your nurse. We give first choice to parents who are:

- only breastfeeding
- from out of town
- preparing to take their baby home
- having trouble travelling to and from the hospital

Feeding your baby

Please talk to your baby's care team about your feeding goals. We are here to support you and your baby.

Breastfeeding: It takes time for premature babies to learn how to breastfeed, but you can supply their feeds by expressing your milk. The nurses can talk to you about pumping and storing your milk if your baby is not able to breastfeed yet.



Gavage Feeding: Babies learning how to feed might start by being fed through a feeding tube (gavage tube). A soft, flexible tube is put in through the baby's nose and enters the baby's stomach. We tape it to the cheek to hold it in place. The milk then flows into the baby's stomach by gravity, or in some cases, by pump.



In this booklet, we use the word 'breastfeeding'. You might prefer a different word such as 'nursing' or 'chestfeeding'. Let your family, friends, and care providers know the word you prefer.

Your care team

If you have questions, you can ask any member of your baby's care team.

As well as nurses and doctors, your care team might also include an occupational therapist, social worker, dietitian, physiotherapist, audiologist, child life specialist, and pharmacist. Once at home, a public health nurse checks on you and your baby.



Your baby's doctor is not always in the hospital. The doctor comes in at least 1 time each day to check on your baby. The best time to talk to your baby's doctor in person or by phone is from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Medicines

Your baby's nurse or doctor can answer your questions about the medicines you or your baby are getting. They can answer these questions and more:

- *What are the medicines for?*
- *Are there any side effects?*
- *Is it okay to take different medicines together?*
- *Is it okay to breastfeed while taking medicines?*

Your baby's care team regularly checks to see how the medicines and feedings are working.

Equipment

There are many different noises in the NICU. Most noises come from the equipment used to support your baby.

These are examples of common equipment:

- pumps that control baby's fluid, medicines, and gavage feeding
- the incubator
- the breathing machine or ventilator



This equipment is very sensitive. To keep your baby safe, do not touch any of the buttons on the equipment. If you have any concerns, please ask the nurse or respiratory therapist.

Transfers

Your baby might need to move to another NICU or a Pediatric Unit that meets their care needs. If this happens:

- We try to transfer your baby closer to your home community. This is not always possible because we need to consider the needs of all babies who are in hospital, in Fraser Health and in BC.
- We try to give you as much notice as possible. Your baby's care team tells you about the NICU or Pediatric Unit your baby is going to, and answers your questions. Often, the team can also arrange a virtual or in-person tour.



Scan this QR code to learn more about moving to the Pediatric Unit at your hospital.

Or, visit patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca.

Then, search "transition nicu to peds" and look for your hospital.

Planning to take your baby home

Babies are usually ready to go home when they are doing all of the following:

- breathing on their own
- feeding by mouth
- gaining enough weight
- meeting the minimum height and weight limits for their car seat
- showing no breathing or heartbeat alarms on the monitor for 5 days

To help you prepare to care for your baby at home, we suggest you stay with your baby in the hospital before the planned day to go home. This gives you the chance to feed and care for your baby before you are on your own at home. Ask your nurse if this is possible.

Remember to keep your hospital bracelet and bring it with you on the day your baby goes home.

Car seat safety

Babies must be in a car seat when travelling in a vehicle. It is the law.

Learn how to use your baby's car seat before they are ready to go home. You can talk to your baby's nurse about car seat safety.



Remember to take care of yourself

When your baby is in the NICU, it is common to forget about your needs as you care for your baby's needs.

- Get lots of rest.
- Eat well-balanced meals and stay hydrated. This helps you feel better and even helps with your milk supply.
- Take some time for yourself. Read, have a pedicure or a massage. Whatever it is, make sure it is some time that is just for you or you and your partner.
- Join a support group.
- Talk to other parents in the NICU. They can be a great support and understand what you are going through.
- Attend parent events or classes that the NICU puts on. This is great for networking and learning about your baby.

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For more information



Scan this QR code to learn more about Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre, including the café, gift shop, parking, hospital maps, services we offer, and more.

Or, visit fraserhealth.ca.

Then, under *Hospitals*, select *Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre*.

More about hospital parking



To buy a parking pass, choose the 'Other' option on the parking machine. Leave your receipt on the dash of your vehicle. You do not have to park in the same parking stall each time.



Scan this QR code to learn more about your baby's care in the NICU.

Or, visit fraserhealth.ca/nicu.

For more information, continued

Scan this QR code to learn more about skin-to-skin cuddling.

Or, visit patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca.

Then, search “skin to skin cuddling NICU”.



Scan this QR code to learn more about expressing your breast milk.

Or, visit patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca.

Then, search “expressing your breast milk”.



Scan this QR code to learn more about resources for you and your baby.

Or, visit patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca.

Then, search “resources for baby”.

How is your care experience today?

Let me tell you what I think.

Please take our **Real Time Patient Experience Survey**.



Step 1. Using your smart device:

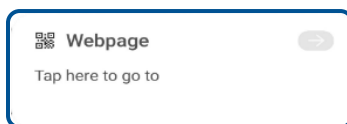
- Open the camera.
Hover over this Quick Response code, **or**
- Download a QR Code Reader app to your device then scan this code.



Scan this QR code, or visit
tinyurl.com/3br9ku9r



Step 2. Look for this message.
Tap this webpage link to start the survey.



Step 3. Take the survey. It takes about 5 minutes.
Please leave out any personal information.

Any time you have an urgent question or concern about your current care, please speak with your care provider, patient care coordinator, or the unit manager.



Your feedback is valuable and helps us improve patient experience.
Fraser Health is committed to Patient Family Centred Care.
Thank you!

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This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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To order, visit patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca