



How to help...Your Infant in the Hospital

In the hospital, the infant can sense the unfamiliar environment. They are aware that their eating and sleeping routines are disrupted. The older infant may become upset by changes in routines and/or caregivers. Unfortunately, because of the way the hospital is set up there is some physical separation from the parent/caregiver. Meaningful and typical interactions from home are often replaced with medical interventions. And although the medical interventions are of the highest importance in the hospital there are some very important things you can do to help your infant.

Below are some ways to help support your infant

- Give staff information about your infant's cues, needs and typical responses.
- When possible, work with staff to develop regular routines similar to home.
- Remain involved in your infant's care.
- Touch, talk to, and hold your infant when medically safe.
- Hang pictures of family members on crib in the infant's line of vision.
- Remain sensitive to your infant's behavior - looking away, changes in posture (such as arching their back, or stretching their arms straight) and changes in activity levels can mean there is too much stimulation.
- Reduce disturbing noises or light when appropriate.
- Swaddle or place rolled towels on either side of your infant when unable to hold or while in the crib.
- Talk softly and touch your infant at the same time to help sooth them.
- Sing or play quiet music.
- Dim bright lights and utilize natural lighting.
- Provide appropriate toys such as rattles, busy boxes and mobiles.
- For your older infant, provide a familiar comfort item from home such as a blanket, stuffed animal or even burp cloth.
- When possible, hold your infant and provide opportunities for them to explore the environment.