

You have received this brochure because your baby may be at risk for developing withdrawal symptoms after birth, also known as neonatal abstinence syndrome. This can be a stressful and emotional time for a family. Our goal is to help you take the best care of your baby. We want to make sure your baby is healthy and safe when going home.



## CHOP NEWBORN CARE LOCATIONS

### PENNSYLVANIA

CHOP Main Campus  
3401 Civic Center Blvd.  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
NICU: 215-590-3083

Chester County Hospital  
701 East Marshall St.  
West Chester, PA 19380  
NICU: 610-431-5394

Doylestown Hospital  
595 West State St.  
Doylestown, PA 18901  
NICU: 215-345-2966

Einstein Medical Center  
Montgomery  
559 W. Germantown Pike  
East Norriton, PA 19403  
NICU: 484-622-2274

Grand View Hospital  
700 Lawn Ave.  
Sellersville, PA 18960  
NICU: 215-453-4788

Holy Redeemer Hospital  
1648 Huntingdon Pike  
Meadowbrook, PA 19046  
NICU: 215-938-2903

Hospital of the University  
of Pennsylvania (HUP)  
3400 Spruce St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
NICU: 215-662-3884

Lancaster Women and Babies  
690 Good Drive  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
NICU: 717-544-3379

Pennsylvania Hospital  
800 Spruce St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
NICU: 215-829-3301

St. Mary Medical Center  
1201 Langhorne-Newtown Road  
Langhorne, PA 19047  
NICU: 215-710-5806

### NEW JERSEY

AtlantiCare Regional  
Medical Center  
65 W. Jimmie Leeds Road  
Pomona, NJ 08205  
NICU: 609-404-3817

University Medical Center  
of Princeton at Plainsboro  
1 Plainsboro Road  
Plainsboro, NJ 08536  
NICU: 609-853-7650

Virtua Voorhees  
100 Bowman Drive  
Voorhees, NJ 08043  
NICU: 856-247-3831

Virtua Memorial Hospital  
175 Madison Ave.  
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060  
NICU: 609-914-7053

NEONATAL

ABSTINENCE

SYNDROME



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## WHAT IS NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME?

During pregnancy, most medications that the mother takes cross the placenta and enter the baby's bloodstream. When the baby is born, he/she is no longer exposed to the medication, but may still be dependent on the drug. This can lead to the baby developing withdrawal symptoms known as neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). NAS occurs most commonly in babies born to women who are dependent on an opioid or opioid-like medications.

## CARE AFTER BIRTH

All babies at risk for NAS will be observed for signs of withdrawal for a minimum of three to five days. The time depends on the type of medication and how the baby is doing.

## SIGNS OF WITHDRAWAL

- High-pitched or excessive crying
- Tremors/jitteriness
- Sleeping difficulties
- Stuffy nose or sneezing
- Feeding difficulties
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Fast breathing
- Skin irritation
- Fever
- Sweating
- Seizures (rare)



## TREATMENT FOR NAS

The first treatment for your child is YOU! We try to manage the symptoms of withdrawal by using as little medicine as possible to keep your baby comfortable and thriving. Calm cuddling in a quiet room with low lights and not a lot of distractions can help babies with NAS feel better. Here are some of the ways you can help your baby:

- **BE TOGETHER:** One of the best things you can do for your baby is to keep him/her with you in your room as much as possible. Being close to your baby helps you to respond quickly to her/his needs. *Your baby will feel safest and most comfortable when close to you.*
- **SKIN TO SKIN:** Spend as much time as you can “skin to skin” with your baby when you are awake. This helps your baby eat and sleep better, and can help decrease symptoms of withdrawal. *This will also help your milk supply if you are breastfeeding.*
- **SWADDLE/CUDDLE:** Hold your baby or swaddle your baby in a light blanket. *Just being close to someone or “tucked” in a swaddle helps your baby feel safe and comfortable.*
- **A CALM ROOM:** Keep your room calm and quiet with the lights down low. *Loud noises and bright lights may upset your baby.*
- **FEED AT EARLY HUNGER CUES:** Feed your baby whenever she/he is hungry, until content, and at least every three hours. Breastfeed your baby unless you are unable to do so for medical reasons. *Do not try to keep the baby on a strict schedule. Frequent feedings help to console your baby.*
- **SUCKING:** If your baby still wants to suck after a good feeding, offer a pacifier. This can be comforting to your baby. *Always make sure your baby is not hungry first!*
- **LIMIT VISITORS:** Try to have only one or two visitors in your room at a time. *Too many visitors may make your baby fussy or not sleep well.*

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,  
PLEASE ASK YOUR BABY'S  
NURSE OR PHYSICIAN.

## MEDICATIONS

When cuddling, feeding and keeping your baby in a calm room are not enough, sometimes we may need to add medications, such as morphine, to help the symptoms of withdrawal. However, having their parents with them as much as possible is still the most important treatment for these babies. If we have to use medicine, we try to use the lowest dose and give it for the shortest amount of time while still making sure that signs of withdrawal are controlled.

## LENGTH OF STAY

If your baby does not need medication for treatment, he/she may be discharged in three to five days. If your baby needs medication, he/she needs to stay in the hospital until symptoms improve and he/she can be weaned completely off the medication. This may require hospitalization for two to six weeks. Babies are not discharged home on medication.

## GOING HOME

Your baby's care team will help decide when it is safe for your baby to go home. Your baby is ready to go home when he/she:

- no longer needs medication
- is feeding and sleeping well
- is easy to console (calm down)
- is growing or maintaining weight
- maintains a healthy temperature, heart rate and normal breathing
- has completed all universal discharge requirements and screenings
- has an appointment made with the pediatrician within one to two days after going home

All babies at risk for NAS will get referrals for social work and County Children's Services to provide the best support for your family.

Some babies with NAS can be irritable for months, but symptoms should gradually improve with time. If you are concerned that your baby's symptoms are becoming more severe after you are home, please contact your pediatrician immediately.