



The NICU/IICN Parent Hour Tips for Bringing Your Baby Home

Anticipating your baby's homecoming can fill you with many emotions— excitement, fear, joy, and worry could be among them. Preparing yourselves and your home ahead of time can help relieve some anxiety and ease the transition for you and your baby. Following are some tips compiled by a NICU graduate parent to help prepare you and your family for life at home after hospitalization.

PARENT EDUCATION:

- GET USED TO READING YOUR BABY'S CUES IN THE HOSPITAL (HUNGER; TIRED; DIRTY/WET DIAPER; PAIN/GAS)
- MAKE SURE YOU CAN PROVIDE YOUR BABY'S CARE INDEPENDENTLY. CAN YOU BATHE, FEED, CONSOLE, AND RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF ILLNESS IN YOUR BABY? ASK YOUR BABY'S NURSE IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS
- TAKE A CPR CLASS/WATCH VIDEO

ITEMS TO HAVE AT HOME:

- CAR SEAT/STROLLER – BENJAMIN ARIAS AT PACKARD CAN CHECK THE INSTALLATION; (650) 736-2981; BARIAS@LPCH.ORG
- CRIB OR BASSINET – BABY SLEEPS ON BACK WITHOUT BLANKETS; SWADDLING/SLEEP SACKS OK
- BABY MONITOR – VIDEO OR AUDIO
- FEEDING SUPPLIES (BOTTLES, NIPPLES, STERILIZER); BREAST PUMP
- DIAPERS, DIAPER WIPES, AQUAPHOR OR OTHER OINTMENT, BATH SUPPLIES
- CLOTHES, BLANKETS, LAUNDRY DETERGENT WITHOUT COLOR OR FRAGRANCE
- THERMOMETER/MEDICATIONS – PRESCRIPTIONS, INFANT TYLENOL, INFANT MOTRIN – KNOW WHEN TO USE AND CORRECT DOSAGES
- SOOTHING MUSIC, MOBILE, TOYS, BOARD BOOKS
- BABY BOOK, CALENDAR, OR NOTEBOOK TO RECORD MILESTONES, QUESTIONS FOR THE DR., FEEDINGS
- BOOK BABY BARGAINS IS A GREAT RESOURCE FOR SELECTING BABY ITEMS

CHOOSING A PEDIATRICIAN – QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- INSURANCE/BILLING – DO THEY ACCEPT YOUR INSURANCE?
- ANY PREMIE/SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD EXPERIENCE?
- OFFICE HOURS/WHO COVERS IF THEY'RE NOT THERE? ON-CALL DRS., ADVICE NURSES?
- URGENT-CARE/HOSPITAL – WHERE DO YOU GO AFTER-HOURS OR IN AN EMERGENCY?
- GOOD MATCH FOR YOU WITH PHILOSOPHY/STYLE?



SPECIAL HOSPITALIZED BABY CONSIDERATIONS:

- HOW LONG TO KEEP BABY HOME AFTER HOMECOMING – DISCUSS WITH YOUR DR., WALKS OUTSIDE ARE OK FOR MOST
- HOW OFTEN TO SEE DR. – PREEMIES: USUALLY MORE OFTEN THAN FULL-TERM BABIES FOR THE FIRST FEW MONTHS
- RSV – SYNAGIS SHOTS – DISCUSS WITH DR. WHETHER YOUR BABY IS A CANDIDATE FOR THIS VACCINATION
- FOR PREEMIES: THINK IN TERMS OF ADJUSTED AGE WHEN CONSIDERING BABY'S SIZE AND DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES FOR THE FIRST 2 YEARS (COUNT AGE FROM DUE DATE, NOT ACTUAL BIRTH DATE)
- FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMS – DEVELOPMENT & BEHAVIOR UNIT (DABU) – FORMERLY INFANT DEVELOPMENT CLINIC – AT PACKARD, EARLY START, CCS – ASK YOUR SOCIAL WORKER ABOUT THESE PROGRAMS

FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

- ACCEPT HELP AS YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE – RUNNING ERRANDS, MEALS, CLEANING, ETC..
- PROTECT BABY FROM GERMS WHEN FIRST HOME: LIMIT VISITORS, NO ONE SICK, EVERYONE WASHES HANDS, SIBLINGS/PARENTS CHANGE CLOTHES AFTER BEING AT SCHOOL/WORK BEFORE HANDLING BABY
- NO SMOKING BY ANY CAREGIVERS OR AROUND BABY
- SIBLINGS – LET THEM HELP WHEN THEY CAN, TAKE AT LEAST A FEW MINUTES A DAY TO FOCUS ON JUST THEM

EMOTIONS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE:

- BEFORE GOING HOME: FEAR, EXCITEMENT, WORRY, UNCERTAINTY, ANTICIPATION
- AT HOME: OVERWHELMED, GUILT, FRUSTRATION, EXHAUSTION, JOY, RELIEF
- TALK TO SOMEONE FOR SUPPORT – FRIENDS FROM THE HOSPITAL, YOUR DOCTOR, YOUR BABY/CHILD'S DOCTORS, FAMILY MEMBERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, NURSES, MOM'S GROUPS

OTHER TIPS:

- PLACE SMOKE & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS (RE: BATTERIES) THROUGHOUT YOUR HOME
- CONSIDER HAVING A LAND LINE IN ADDITION TO CELL PHONE FOR EMERGENCIES
- TRAVEL – ASK DR. ABOUT WHEN IT'S OK TO TRAVEL WITH BABY, BRING LOTS OF EXTRA SUPPLIES ON PLANE
- PETS – INTRODUCE SLOWLY TO BABY, ALLOW PETS THEIR OWN SPACE
- STAY IN TOUCH WITH PARENTS YOU MET IN THE HOSPITAL
- STAY OVERNIGHT AS HOMECOMING APPROACHES, IF NEEDED
- HAVE FOOD, ETC. FOR YOURSELF FOR AT LEAST THE FIRST FEW DAYS HOME
- HAVE A LIST OF IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS ACCESSIBLE: PEDIATRICIAN, POISON CONTROL CENTER (800)662-9886