

July Inkubator



2009

Hotline 314-251-6636

www.miraclebaby.org

NICUPS@mercy.net

Who are the NICUPS?

Since 1991, the NICUPS' purpose has been to support and empower new parents in the NICU to be the strongest advocates for their children. Drawing upon our own experiences as graduate NICU parents, we offer hope, compassion, love and encouragement to each family, while respecting the dignity of all families in crisis.

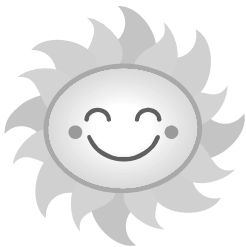
Each of the parent volunteers were once in a NICU with children of their own. Their personal experience enables them to offer vital emotional support to current NICU families. Support begins as early as mid-pregnancy for mothers on bed rest, continues through their time in the NICU, and is on-going until the family feels support is no longer needed. We are here to help, so please let us know what we can do to assist you.

Freedom is never given, it is won.

--unknown

People who say they sleep like a baby probably don't have one.

--Leo J. Burke



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| Dates to Remember | | | |
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| <u>Event</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>When</u> | <u>Where</u> |
| NICU Parent Orientation Class | Let us help you orientate yourself to the NICU & parenting in the NICU. Parent Orientation followed by DVD presentation. | Tuesday 7/14 & 7/28 7:30-9pm | Conference Rm. NICU South |
| Unit Visit by a NICUP | A NICUP volunteer will visit the unit to chat with parents and families. | Each week | NICU North NICU South |
| Super Star Sibling Party | The Super Star Sibling Party is an opportunity for siblings of babies in the SJMMC NICU to learn more about their little sister or brother. | Saturday 7/11 1-2pm | NICU South Room 1 |
| "Leaving the Nest" Discharge Class | This class is the best way to learn everything you will need to know about taking your baby home from the NICU. The class is taught by NICU RNs and will cover basic baby care, giving medications, car seat safety, and many more helpful topics and tips. We recommend that you sign up for this class when your baby 32 weeks of age or older. | Every: Tuesday 6-7:30pm Thursday 6-7:30pm Saturday 11-12:30 | Conference Rm. NICU South To sign-up call 251-6286 or stop by the NICU South desk |
| Basic Preemie Development Class | Would you like to learn more about your baby's developing sensory system, how to understand your baby's cues and how to react to them? This class is recommended for parents whose babies are 32 weeks adjusted age. | Wednesdays 7/1 7/29 | Please contact Barb Baer in the OT office to sign up. Call 314-251-6286 |

Sun Safety Tips

- Until six months of age you should keep your baby out of direct sunlight; move to the shade or under a tree, umbrella or stroller canopy.
- Dress him/her in comfortable lightweight clothing that covers the body and a hat with a brim that shades the face and ears.
- Child-sized sunglasses with UV protection are a good idea for protecting the eyes.
- After 6 months of age choose a sunscreen made for children; test a small area on his/her skin for a reaction before applying all over.
- The sun's rays are the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and can come through the clouds even on cloudy days; try to keep your child out of the sun during these

Limiting Sun Exposure

By: Beth Weinhaus

When the days grow longer and the sun warmer, most families can't wait to take to the outdoors. But when there's an infant in the family, being outside requires special precautions. In fact, most pediatricians advise keeping infants out of direct sunlight entirely. Infant skin is thinner and more delicate than adults', or even than older children's. And because the skin's sun protection mechanism isn't fully developed yet, newborn and infant skin burns more easily. Even babies with darker skin need to be protected.

While keeping a baby indoors all summer may be the ideal from a medical point of view, it certainly isn't practical. Few babies spend an entire summer cooped up indoors. So if you plan to be outside with your baby this summer, learn how to protect the littlest family members so they can have safe fun in the sun, too. Dermatologists caution that the damage from the sun is cumulative, and most people receive up to 80 percent of their lifetime exposure to the sun before age eighteen. Beginning a sun protection program early will help protect babies from sunburn now... and from skin cancer later.

Minimizing Sun Exposure

- When possible, try to avoid being outdoors in direct sunlight between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest. Plan walks for the early morning or late afternoon.
- Buy a carriage/stroller with a canopy top that can be adjusted to protect your child from the sun, no matter which direction the rays are coming from.
- Have window shades in the back seat of your car to provide shade for your baby while you're driving.
- Keep a sun shade/umbrella in the trunk of your car to be used at the beach, park, in a friend's backyard, etc.
- Check your baby frequently to make sure he's out of direct sunlight. The angle of the sun shifts over the course of a day, so even the most carefully positioned umbrella or stroller shade will have to be constantly adjusted.

Dressing the Part

Even shade is not total protection from the sun, since the sun's rays can be reflected off many surfaces, such as sand and concrete. Dressing babies properly will help protect them even when they're not exposed to direct sunlight.

- Choose clothes that cover the arms and legs. Loose-fitting clothes made of natural fibers (such as cotton) will help keep your baby cooler.
- Tightly woven fabrics are more protective than loose weaves.
- Sunglasses don't just look cool; they also help protect babies' eyes. Find infant shades that say on the label that they block at least 99 percent of the sun's rays.
- ALWAYS put a hat on a baby who's going to be outdoors in the summer sun. The hat should cover the top of the head (i.e., no headband visors), and should have a wide brim in front to shade the face. Hats with soft cloth neck flaps are ideal.

Because infants have thinner skin and underdeveloped melanin, their skin burns more easily than that of older kids. But sunscreen should **not** be applied to babies under 6 months of age, so they absolutely must be kept out of the sun whenever possible. If your infant must be in the sun, dress him or her in clothing that covers the body, including hats with wide brims to shadow the face. Use an umbrella to create shade.

The following guidelines are from "Helping Baby Grow", WI Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Health, with permission (POH 4022, 9/97).

Miracle Moment

By: Stacy Kneip

The day that changed my life forever was September 29, 2008 at 7:30 am. I went for my Level 2 Ultrasound-the one where you see the anatomy. I couldn't wait to find out if I was having a boy or a girl. I never did, but what I did find out was that I had no amniotic fluid. I was told to terminate my pregnancy. I wouldn't do that; my baby still had a strong heartbeat and as long as I had that, I wasn't go to terminate. I was in and out of the hospital for that week. On October 8, my water broke and I was sent to St. John's. I was there for three days, sent home, and came back every three days until I was 25 weeks. Oct 26, I went to St. John's to stay on the labor and delivery floor since no one had any clue what was going on with me. I was given steroids and told to wait. I was on very strict bed rest, monitored 24/7 and only showered twice a week since my fluid was so low. I ended up with chorioamnitis. On November 19th, I was induced and when I began having contractions, my baby's heart rate dropped. They tried to do an amnioinfusion, but it failed by making my babies heart rate drop even faster. I was rushed into an emergency c section. Hope was born at 12:56 a.m. on November 20, 2008.

She was 2 lbs 4 oz. Everyone outside of the NICU believes that the baby's health and condition depends on the weight and gestation in which they were born-that's completely wrong. Hope was given CPR and was rushed in to the NICU. Three hours later, I was able to see her. I was scared to see her and scared to love her, because if I did I would fall even more in love with her than I already was. If things took a wrong turn, I didn't want to have to say goodbye. I got 3 hours of sleep and went right back down there. I learned about the machines they put her on. I also learned that my daughter had Hypo plastic lungs, Emphysema, and Pulmonary Hypertension-the list can go on for ever. They tried every vent and her body wouldn't cooperate until they tried the Oscillator. Hope was given three chest tubes and an abdomen tube. She went from the Oscillator, to the Jett, to the conventional vent, and did so well in one month's time that she went straight to Nasal Cannula for three months. She was discharged March 18, 2009 and is now 10lbs 14 oz. She loves life and her favorite toys are balloons. She only crabs when she's tired; otherwise she's always happy and smiling. She was known in the NICU for being the sweetest baby. She had trouble with reflux (that's common) and she is beginning to get over it. She was given a G-button for her feedings and is doing great with her bottle now. Her splints were discontinued about a month ago; she wore them for about two or three months. She is doing great developmentally; she just has trouble with lifting her head during tummy time. She is a true miracle and I thank God everyday for saving her life (just like I thanked Dr.'s Klesh, Brenner, and Mauer everyday for working so hard to save her life). They all saw what God saw in her and made it their duty to make sure she lived. Her condition was not hour by hour or day by day, Hope was second by second when she was born. I feel blessed every morning when I see her smile.

She truly is the best thing that has ever happened to me.

