



NICUPS INKUBATOR

AUGUST 2008

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President's Corner

By, Sarah Smith

I am pleased to share with you two great learning opportunities that will be available this month. On Friday, August 1st and Friday, August 22nd, from 10-11 a.m. two different experts in our NICU will be speaking on two very important subjects – drugs and breast milk. **Pam Pinter, NICU Lactation Consultant**, will speak on August 1st about how to best provide the key ingredient in your baby's growth, breast milk. For those of you who would like to breast feed their baby after discharge, a video will provide you with the tools to make that process more successful. **Kelly Burch, NICU Pharmacologist**, will speak on August 22nd about the use of pharmaceuticals in your baby's care, how a decision is made to get the best result, and how you are a key person in that process. Both of these discussions will take place in the NICU South Classroom, just inside the doors of NICU South. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about the important care your baby is receiving.

WHO ARE THE NICUPS?

Since 1991, the NICUP's 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.

AUGUST CALENDAR	What	Description	When	Where
	NICU Parent Orientation Class	Let us help you orientate yourself to the NICU and to parenting in the NICU. NICU Parent Orientation followed by: DVD presentation Free March of Dimes NICU Baby Journals Orientation supplemented by guest speakers on select Friday mornings.	Wednesday 8/13 & 8/27 7-8:30 p.m.	NICU South Classroom ("New" NICU South - 2nd Floor)
			Friday 8/1, 8/8, 8/22 @10am	
	Unit Visit by a NICUP	A NICUP volunteer will visit the unit to visit with parents and families.	Wednesday 8/1, 8/6 & 8/20	NICU North NICU South
	Basic Premie Development Class	Would you like to learn more about your baby's developing sensory system, understanding your baby's cues and how to react to them? This class is recommended for parents whose babies are 32 weeks adjusted age.	8/13 @ 1:30pm	Please contact Barb Baer in the OT office to sign up for the class by calling 251-6286.
	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.	Sunday August 3rd 1-2 pm	6th Floor#3 To sign-up call 251-6222 or at NICU North



Good germs and bad germs in the NICU

We spend a lot of time worrying about germs in NICU. Premature and sick babies need help defending themselves from bad germs that cause infections. You already know that we ask everyone coming to see a baby in NICU to "scrub in" as if they were going to perform surgery. A sudsy two minute scrub, up to the elbows, and under the fingernails helps protect the babies from germs coming in from outside NICU.

Babies sometimes need help from medicines-antibiotics- to fight infection. We are careful to use antibiotics only when they are clearly needed, and for as short a time as possible. This helps us protect babies from getting infections from "Super-Bugs", which are germs that have been exposed to antibiotics so often that they have learned to survive even in the presence of antibiotic medications.

Not all germs are bad. Recent research shows that giving good germs into the stomach and intestines helps protect against a complication called necrotizing enterocolitis. The idea is similar to adults using Activia cheese or yogurt to help balance good and bad germs in the intestine. We can't give babies cheese, but we give healthy micro-organisms called probiotics using Flora Q 2 once a day with a feeding.

If you want to know more, say "Teach me about good and bad germs" to your NICU caregiver and you'll have a lot to talk about!

By, Kelly Burch, PharmD
NICU Pharmacist

Sun Safety



The following guidelines are from "Helping Baby Grow", WI Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Health

- **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 chose 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 hours.



Who are the People Behind the Green Shirts?

The bright green shirts that the NICUPs wear are hard to miss, but who are the people behind those shirts?

Jeanne Schroeder



Hello! My name is Jeanne. I had a 31 weeker in November of 2004. My son, Carter, is now 3 ½ years old and is doing great. I have been a NICUP for a year and a half now. I share the Corresponding Secretary duties and give the Super Star Sibling Party each month. I wanted to join the NICUPS because having my son in the unit was probably the most stressful time in my life. I want to make it a tiny bit easier for other parents who are going through a similar experience and give back to the Unit that took such good care of my son.

Everything was going along just fine in my pregnancy. My husband and I were reveling in the fact that we were going to have a 'bonus baby'. We had just adopted a baby boy from Russia when I found out I was pregnant with Carter. However, during my 28th week, I gained 10 pounds literally overnight. Since this was my first pregnancy that had progressed so far, I didn't think much of it. I thought I just ate too much! Luckily, by chance, I had an appointment with my OB a few days later who diagnosed me with pre-eclampsia. I was put on hospital bed rest for the duration of my pregnancy. Three weeks later, at 31 weeks, Carter failed a non stress test and was delivered. He stayed in the NICU for 5 weeks. Those were the longest 5 weeks of my life. I felt so much guilt over having to split my time and energy between my two babies. I had one at home that I was just getting to know and bond with and one in the hospital that desperately needed my attention too. On top of it, my husband and I had used all of our time off from work with the adoption of our older son earlier in the year. We both had to go back to work almost immediately. I had never felt pulled in so many directions before!

If I could give one piece of advice to parents with babies in the NICU now, it would be to try to remember that there are going to be really, really good days and there are going to be really, really bad days. *Every* baby has them. When the good days start to outnumber the bad days, which they will, you will know you have turned a corner! Someone told me this when my son was two days old and it helped me maintain some sort of peace throughout the next couple of months.

Fortunately, we made it through those tough times and on the other side, were able to be extremely grateful for the tremendous medical care that our son was given. We are so, so lucky to have lived where we did and had access to such a facility as the St. John's NICU. Hopefully I can give back to the Unit that helped us so much and make it a little bit easier for other families with babies in the NICU.

Well, that's my story. Come join me at the next Super Star Sibling Party! I would love to meet you and hear your story...



NICU
Parent
Orientation

Let us help you orientate yourself to the NICU and parenting in the NICU.

*Receive a March of Dimes NICU Baby Journal

*Q & A and NICU Parenting Vide

*Refreshments and snacks will be provided

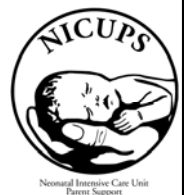
Wednesday, August 13th & 27th

Questions call:

7:00 — 8:00 p.m.

(314) 251-6636

NICU South Classroom(2nd Floor)



Miracle Moment-Our Early Miracle

What started out as a normal pre-planned pregnancy, turned out to be the surprise of our lives.

In the 30th week of pregnancy, while being watched closely by my local doctor, my blood pressure slowly started elevating. During a normal check up, my doctor decided to keep me in the hospital for observation. Then only a few short hours later, I was transferred to St. John's Mercy Medical Center to carry out the rest of my pregnancy on strict bed rest. After nearly a week, I awoke early with a very bad headache and my blood pressure could not be reduced with medicine. An hour later the doctor came in and said that we are going to deliver you now, in order to save both you and the baby. I had reached the peak of pre-eclampsia and was off for an emergency c-section.



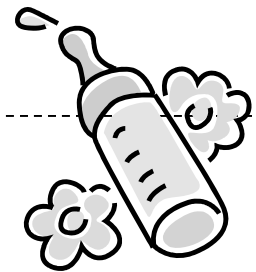
When our 31 week old daughter arrived, breach, she cried and that seemingly tiny 2 lb 8 oz. baby, who had to fight for her very survival taught us how precious life is and how the will to live is stronger than we could ever imagine.

After all the chaos and more than six weeks living in the NICU, I am proud to say that we are a stronger family than ever, thanks to our precious miracle. Our friends and family joked that we just wanted a millennium baby, since she was born just before Christmas of 2000 and wasn't due until the end of February of 2001. I remember my prescheduled baby shower occurred after her birth, but before she came home from the hospital.

Our little preemie, who had many ups and downs in the NICU and many years of catch up with other children, is now a well balanced beautiful young lady. She loves to play baseball, go fishing, and would live outside if we let her. One of our proudest moments recently, was when she dressed up for career day at school as a Neonatologist. She always says that she wants to be just like Dr. Elizabeth Jung.

Written by, Theresa McKnight, NICUP

Ways to Improve Milk Production



Many mothers of premature infants find the experience of pumping and maintaining their breast milk to be a challenging and frustrating experience. Although giving birth early does not limit milk production, some of the mothers' medical conditions that accompany an early birth, fatigue, stress, and irregular breast emptying, may impact breast milk production. Despite the best efforts of some mothers, they may find that their milk production may be on the low side or decrease after weeks of pumping. To improve milk production:

1. Make sure you are pumping with a medical grade breast pump.
2. Pump frequently, as much as eight times in 24 hours and massage your breasts while pumping.
3. Pump for two minutes beyond the last drop of breast milk (this could be for as long as 20 to 30 minutes)
4. Daily Kangaroo care helps to maintain lactation.
5. Pump at your baby's bedside. (The NICU has some freestanding breast pumps available for mothers who would like this.)
6. Nuzzle the baby on an emptied breast.
7. Check to make sure that the breast shield used during pumping is the proper size and not limiting the flow of milk.
8. Try to take time to take care of yourself. Taking time to rest, good nutrition, and five to six hours of uninterrupted sleep is important.
9. Some mothers have a glass of liquid (water, milk, juice) when they sit down to pump.
10. Let your doctor know that you are having problems with maintaining your breast milk supply. Some medicines and medical conditions may impact your breast milk supply. There are some medications that may help to stimulate a milk supply, such as Reglan. Your doctor will decide if this is the right medicine for you.

References: Breastfeeding: A Guide for the Medical Profession by Dr. Ruth Lawrence

Breastfeeding and Human Lactation by Jan Riordan

Written by, Pam Pinter, Lactation Consultant