



Helping Hand

A Newsletter for Families

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University of Connecticut Health Center

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Your Baby's Hearing

by Shari Galvin, R.N., B.S.N.

Your baby's ears began to form in the fourth week of life. By the 27th week, the ears were fully developed. Your baby was used to hearing the sounds inside the womb – mom's heartbeat, sounds and voices around mom. When a baby is born early, he can hear quite well, but his ears are still developing and loud noises can cause lasting damage. For this reason, we speak in quiet voices near your baby's bedside, cover isolettes with blankets to muffle sounds, and even use cottonballs over your baby's ears if necessary.

Every newborn born in the State of Connecticut is screened for hearing loss before he/she goes home from the hospital. Premature babies are screened around 36 weeks gestational age, usually close to the date of discharge. Hearing screenings are done to check for hearing loss so that special services can begin as soon as possible, if needed.

Testing a baby's hearing is quick and does not hurt. Tiny electrodes (leads) are placed on the baby's body, and tiny earphones are placed over the baby's ears. If your baby requires further testing, he/she will need to be seen by an audiologist after discharge. This is a hearing specialist who works with the hearing impaired. The specialist will be able to check your baby for different types of hearing loss. The nursery staff will assist you in making an appointment, if needed

Quite a lot of information and support is available for families who have a child with hearing loss. It is important to remember that not all hearing loss is found at birth. If you have a concern about your child's hearing, contact your pediatrician. The earlier a child with hearing loss is identified, the less effect the loss will have on his/her future. For more information, ask your baby's nurse for the brochure on the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program or call the Connecticut Birth to Three System at 1-800-505-7000 for services and support.



Newborn Intensive Care and Nurseries

Family Programs

Family programs are available to all families in the nurseries and are provided free of charge. These programs include:

- Parent group
- Parent library
- Infant CPR classes
- Breastfeeding Resource & Support Team
- Cuddler Program
- Parent-to-Parent
- HEAL

Please see the Family Program List in your Parent Packet or those posted at scrub sinks for a description of each.



Editorial Board

Shari Galvin, RN, BSN

Donna Howe, RN

Martine Scibilia, RN, BSN

Peg Tuttle, RNC

Question of the Month

by Lois Diehm, RNC

Do I need to take my baby to a special pediatrician after she/he is discharged?"

No. All pediatricians are trained to care for babies whether they are premature or not. However, sometimes a baby may need to see another specialist about a problem. If so, our discharge coordinator, Rachel Schmitt will discuss this further with you before your baby goes home.

If this is your first baby, you may want to take some time before the baby goes home to talk to pediatricians in your health care plan and pick one you feel comfortable with. Relatives and friends may recommend their pediatrician.

Here, at John Dempsey Hospital, the pediatricians are: Dr. Catherine Sullivan and Dr. Barbara Ziogas. They work at Pediatric Associates in the Dowling South Medical Building. New patients can call them at 1-800-535-6232 to make an appointment.

Calendar of Events

CPR Class - Check Parent's Lounge for dates and times.



WWW.Babies now at UConn Nurseries

Proud parents can share their joy with family and friends through the World Wide Web. A photo of your newborn, first name, weight, length and parents' first name(s) will appear in our Web Nursery at uconnhealth.org. If you are interested, please ask your baby's nurse for the parental consent form. **Helping Hand** is also now available on the web at www.uconnhealth.org/nursery.





Visiting Baby

- Parents are welcome to be with their infants 24 hours a day.
- Grandparents and other adult visitors over age 14 are welcome with a parent between 1:00 pm-8:00 pm.
- Siblings are welcome after a brief health screening.
- Please speak to your baby's nurse.
- Guidelines for visiting are in your Parent Packet.



Parents Corner

The Lizotte Family, proud new parents of Cara Lizotte, would like to share a web site for baby clothing. Clothes for Tiny Babies by Pat Cotter has an online catalog that can be viewed in full color at www.winternet.com/~cotter/preemieclothes or foraspecialbaby.itool.com.

You can also order by email for the quickest service – send email to cotter@winternet.com and mail a check.

To order a catalog by mail, full color, with sizes and prices, contact

Pat Cotter, 1682 Roxanna Lane
New Brighton, MN 55112
651-631-3128

Mrs. Lizotte tells us the clothes are very well made, soft and comfortable and prices range from \$3.00 to \$15.00.

by Shari Galvin, R.N., B.S.N.



Who's Who in the Nurseries

by Nona Williams, RN.

Attending Neonatologist: This is a physician who leads the medical team and is ultimately responsible for all decision-making. We have 6 attendings and they each manage the nurseries for approximately 3 weeks at a time.

Fellow: A pediatrician who is continuing their education in the subspecialty of neonatology.

Resident/Intern: These are doctors with 1-3 years of experience. They specialize in Pediatrics and provide direct patient care in the NICU.

Neonatal Nurse Practitioner/ Physician Assistant: These are advanced practice individuals with formal education and clinical experience in the management of sick newborns. They provide care to your infant under the supervision of the attending Neonatologist.

Primary Nursing Team: The nursing staff is made up entirely of Registered Nurses. When your baby is admitted to the nursery, you and your baby are assigned a primary nursing team. The team is made up of nurses from all shifts to provide consistent care for your baby. Your baby's primary nursing team is identified on the Welcome Board in your baby's room.

Discharge Planning Nurse: She is a nurse who is dedicated to making the transition from our nursery to your home or a hospital near your home as smooth as possible. She can help suggest doctors for your baby near your home and will coordinate any supplies or appointments needed after discharge.

Social Worker: There are two social workers in the nursery. Each baby and family is assigned a social worker. They provide a variety of services extending from emotional support to providing financial information.

Developmentalist: There is a Newborn Developmental Team, including two developmental specialists, a developmental nurse educator, and a developmental support coordinator who work closely with the medical team and with families to help identify and support each infant's unique developmental needs throughout their hospitalization and in the transition to home.

Neonatal Dietitian: She is an experienced nutritionist who specializes in infant care. She works with the medical team to ensure that all babies receive the best nutrition therapy possible. She is available to parents to discuss any questions about your baby's nutrition or growth.

Respiratory Therapists: These professionals maintain the equipment that is used to help your baby breathe and assist the team with decisions regarding respiratory support.

Support Staff: Our support staff consists of: Nurses aides who maintain the supplies and equipment in the nursery.

Helping Hand

Health unit clerks provide secretarial support to the nurseries and maintain patient charts. They also welcome families and visitors to the nurseries.

Cuddlers are a group of volunteers who have specialized training to hold or "cuddle" the babies when parents can't be present. They also may comfort some babies in their incubators.

All of the support staff help the health care team give our best care to you and your baby.

✓ It Out!



Worried about health insurance? The HUSKY Plan (Health Care for Uninsured Kids and Youths), is Connecticut's new health insurance program for children. Every child needs quality health care. The HUSKY Plan offers a health care package for children from birth to age 19. In addition, HUSKY Plus offers services for children with special physical or behavioral health needs.

To take the worry out of paying for health care, HUSKY provides free or low-cost health insurance. HUSKY is now covering thousands of children and teenagers in working families of all income levels. Call the following toll-free number to find out about health insurance for your child. They will answer any of your questions and help you apply.

1-877-CT-HUSKY
(1-877-284-8759)

Web site address: www.huskyhealth.com
Si desea información en español, por favor
lámenos.

From the Connecticut Department of Social Services.
by Shari Galvin, R.N., B.S.N.



Chaplain Services



The Murray Heilig Chapel is located on the main floor across from the Gift Shop. Chaplains are available to parents and families at all times. They can perform baptisms and offer spiritual support and prayer. Please see your nurse to contact a chaplain.

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