



Helping Hand

A Newsletter for Families

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University of Connecticut Health Center 263 Farmington Avenue Farmington, Connecticut

Car Seat Safety

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

When your baby is ready for that first ride home, it's very exciting. Parents may have purchased an infant car seat, but may not be prepared to use it correctly. The Connecticut Safe Kids Coalition wants to help you to have a safe ride home. They have the following recommendations:

- Read your vehicle owner's manual and car seat instructions carefully. Practice putting the car seat in and out of the car before you bring it to the hospital.
- Never secure an infant in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. The back seat is the safest place for kids of any age. Everyone in the family should buckle-up for safety.
- Send in the car seat registration card so that you will be notified in case your car seat is recalled.
- Never use a car seat that has been involved in a car accident.
- Guide the safety belt correctly through the car seat.
- Buckle the car seat into the vehicle correctly.
- Get a tight fit – the seat should not move more than one inch from side to side or toward the front of the vehicle.
- Check your owner's manual to see if you need a locking clip. Not all safety belts will secure your car seat without one.
- Look at the bulletin board in the OB waiting room for more information.
- If unable to fit your car seat securely into the car, please call your local police department for assistance.

Remember that most crashes occur close to home on roads with a low speed limit. When used correctly, car seats prevent injuries and save lives!

Contact any of the resources below for more information:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – Auto Safety Hotline 1-800-424-9393.
- Safety-BeltSafe Helpline 1-800-745-SAFE
- CT Safe Kids Coalition (860) 545-9988



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.

Calendar of Events

CPR classes are posted in Parent Lounge.



Editorial Board

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

Donna Howe, R.N.

Martine Scibilia, R.N., B.S.N.

Peg Tuttle, R.N.C.

Question of the Month

Who are Cuddlers and What do They do?

By Rita Rehm



I would like to introduce you to a very dedicated group of volunteers who are important to your babies.

Our Cuddlers!

They come in for 2 or 3 hour visits and support the nursing staff and their patients. Knowing parents can't be here 24 hours a day, they give TLC as needed. They sing, read books or just quietly rock the babies who are ready for more interaction. On occasion, they even walk around the room, if that is what a baby enjoys.

All our cuddlers have gone through an interview process that includes a health screening and an orientation with a nurse in the Special Care Nursery. Anyone with a love for babies and the willingness to help is welcome. We have grandparents, grandparents-in-waiting, parents with extra time and men and women who come in after work. Their willingness to cuddle helps your babies when you can't be here. We are thankful for their help!



Parents Corner

Territory

A tiny gold cherub pinned to cardboard hangs beside a crayon drawing of squiggles and squares.

A medal, a special blanket, a child's artwork, family photos - this one is ours.

From *Baby Hands and Baby Feet, Poems and Drawings from the Nursery* by Nancy J. Kennedy and David Pegher.

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 <http://health.uchc.edu/nursery>. If you are interested, please ask your baby's nurse for the parental consent form.

Please be aware that we now have a computer available for your personal use, donated to our unit by the family of one of our NICU graduates and dedicated for "parent use" only. It is equipped with Internet access as well as Microsoft Office.

Please feel free to use it as needed. It is located in the OB Patient Lounge, which is at the end of the obstetrical hallway.



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*.

Who's Who in the Nurseries

by Nona Williams, R.N.

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: They 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: They 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:

Nurse's aides who maintain the supplies and equipment in the nursery.

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!



The newborn infant is born totally competent and equipped to interact with his/her new world. All her senses ~ hearing, seeing, smelling and touching ~ are present, and she communicates her needs to the adults around her through crying and behavior.

When a baby is born prematurely or sick, she is even more reactive to her environment. Caring for your baby in the nursery presents many challenges. Allow your baby to tell you what she needs. Mostly your baby will let you know how she is feeling by how she looks ~ color, facial expression and general muscle tone (body language). When approaching your baby's bedside, stand and watch your baby for awhile. If she is sleeping, quietly talk to him/her, letting her know you are there before touching her. Watch how she responds to you. Allow her to lead the way. If your baby is fussy or crying, your response would be immediate, a combination of soothing, quiet talk and a firm, gentle touch. Each day with your baby will be different, depending upon how she is feeling. Remember... you are her parent, the one constant and consistent person in her life that brings love, gentleness and security.

Editor's note: For clarity the female gender was used. The article applies to both male and female infants.

by Elaine Gerry, R.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.