

Dear Parent,

Congratulations from Shawnee Mission Medical Center (SMMC)! We are committed to give you and your baby the best care possible. This letter is to help you to know what to expect during your hospital stay. It will help you be prepared to care for your baby.

We know that a baby at risk for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) will have less problems when they are cared for by their family. It is best, for your baby, when you and your family can be here to comfort them. We also know that a quiet environment can help. We would like to keep you and your baby together during the hospital stay. This might be on the Mother/Baby unit or in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). It has been shown that babies need less medical treatment and may go home faster when their parents provide care and comfort.

After delivery, we will monitor your baby. This is what you can expect:

1. Your baby will stay with you on the Mother/Baby unit.
2. The nurses will begin watching for signs of NAS by using a score system starting at about 4 hours of age.
3. The scoring will be done with a NAS scoring tool. Your baby will be scored every 2 to 4 hours. This will be done around feeding times. We would like you to participate in the scoring with your nurse and will provide you with your own log.
4. We will monitor your baby for 3 to 5 days. The length will depend on the type of drug/medication used during your pregnancy.
5. If your baby needs medication for NAS, he or she will be transferred to the NICU. The NICU has private patient rooms so you will be able to continue to stay with your baby.
6. Once a baby is placed on medication, it may take at least 2 weeks or more to wean off the medication.

During your baby's stay, it is best if you and your family provide comfort care to your baby. The staff will be here to help you, but it is best if you are the main caregiver. You can provide this care in the following ways:

- ♥ Provide comfort for your baby in a quiet, calm environment.
 - ◆ Provide skin-to-skin care for your baby.
 - ◆ Place baby in a swaddle sac. This is to provide comfort when not skin to skin.
 - ◆ Keep room lights dim.
 - ◆ Keep room noise low.
 - ◆ Limit visitors.
 - ◆ Breastfeed, unless you are told not to by a provider for medical reasons.
 - ◆ If you choose to formula feed, a small volume more often may help.

- ♥ **Observe your baby's NAS symptoms**
 - ◆ Record in your "Baby's Symptom Diary" how often your baby:
 - Feeds
 - Has a wet diaper
 - Has a dirty diaper
 - Sneezes
 - Yawns
 - Awakens between feedings
 - Cries more than usual
 - Is the baby jittery?

- ♥ **Stay with your baby**
 - ◆ Make a plan to stay with your baby as long as they need to be in the hospital. Remember, if he or she needs medication for NAS, they will be in the hospital longer. Please make a plan to stay with your baby as much as possible:
 - See if someone can watch your other children or pets.
 - Let your family know that you may need to be at the hospital for several weeks.
 - ◆ If you can't be with your baby at all times, have a family member or friend stay with your baby. We will provide you a visitor log to help schedule others when you cannot be here.
 - ◆ We will always be nearby to help you.

- ♥ **Love and Hugs Program**

In the NICU we have a program called Love and Hugs. Our volunteers have been trained how to hold babies in the NICU. They are here to assist staff and families when your baby may need a little extra attention or when you may not be available. Our volunteers are here mornings, Monday through Friday.

We look forward to helping you and your baby have the best experience possible. It is our goal to partner with you to provide the best care now and following discharge.

If you have any questions before you deliver, please contact our referral line: 913-632-4487. If you have questions after you deliver please contact your baby's nurse, doctor or nurse practitioner.