

You have received this brochure because your baby may be at risk for developing withdrawal symptoms after birth. This is known as neonatal abstinence syndrome. It can be a stressful and emotional time for a family. Our goal is to help you take the best care of your baby. We want to make sure your baby is going to be healthy and safe once they get home.



CHOP NEWBORN CARE LOCATIONS

AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, Mainland Campus
65 W. Jimmie Leeds Road, Pomona, NJ 08240

Doylestown Hospital
595 W. State St., Doylestown, PA 18901

Einstein Montgomery
559 West Germantown Pike, East Norriton, PA 19403

Grand View Health, Main Campus
700 Lawn Ave., Sellersville, PA 18960

Holy Redeemer Hospital
1648 Huntington Pike, Meadowbrook, PA 19046

Main Line Health, Bryn Mawr Hospital
130 S. Bryn Mawr Ave., Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Main Line Health, Lankenau Medical Center
100 E. Lancaster Ave., Wynnewood, PA 19096

Main Line Health, Paoli Hospital
255 W. Lancaster Ave., Paoli, PA 19301

Main Line Health, Riddle Hospital
1068 W. Baltimore Pike, Media, PA 19063

Penn Medicine Chester County Hospital
701 E. Marshall St., West Chester, PA 19380

Penn Medicine Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania
3400 Spruce St., 8 Ravdin, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Penn Medicine Pennsylvania Hospital
800 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA 19107

Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center
One Plainsboro Road, Plainsboro, NJ 08536

Penn Medicine Women & Babies Hospital
690 Good Drive, Lancaster, PA 17604

St. Mary Medical Center
1201 Langhorne-Newtown Road, Langhorne, PA 19047

Virtua Mount Holly Hospital
175 Madison Ave., Mount Holly, NJ 08060

Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital
1600 Haddon Ave., Camden, NJ 08103

Virtua Voorhees Hospital
100 Bowman Drive, Voorhees, NJ 08043



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NEONATAL

ABSTINENCE

SYNDROME



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Newborn Care

WHAT IS NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME?

During pregnancy, most medications that the pregnant parent takes cross the placenta and enter the baby's bloodstream. When the baby is born, they are no longer exposed to the medication, but may still be dependent on the drug. This can lead to the baby developing withdrawal symptoms known as neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). NAS occurs most commonly in babies born to individuals who are dependent on an opioid or opioid-like medications but it can also be caused by other types of medications. If NAS is caused only by opioid or opioid-like medications, sometimes this may be referred to as neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS).

CARE AFTER BIRTH

All babies at risk for NAS will be observed using a scoring tool called Eat, Sleep, Console (ESC). Your baby will be observed for at least three to five days, but this may be longer depending on the type of medication and how your baby is doing.

SIGNS OF WITHDRAWAL

- High-pitched or excessive crying
- Tremors/jitteriness
- Sleeping difficulties
- Stuffy nose or sneezing
- Feeding difficulties
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Fast breathing
- Skin irritation
- Fever
- Sweating
- Seizures (rare)



TREATMENT FOR NAS

The first treatment for your child is YOU! We try to manage the symptoms of withdrawal by using as little medicine as possible to keep your baby comfortable and thriving. Calm cuddling in a quiet room with low lights and not a lot of distractions can help babies with NAS feel better. Here are some of the ways you can help your baby:

- **BE TOGETHER:** One of the best things you can do for your baby is to keep them with you in your room as much as possible. Being close to your baby helps you to respond quickly to their needs. *Your baby will feel safest and most comfortable when close to you.*
- **SKIN TO SKIN:** Spend as much time as you can “skin to skin” with your baby when you are awake. This helps your baby eat and sleep better, and can help decrease symptoms of withdrawal. *This will also help your milk supply if you are breastfeeding.*
- **SWADDLE/CUDDLE:** Hold your baby or swaddle your baby in a light blanket. *Just being close to someone or “tucked” in a swaddle helps your baby feel safe and comfortable.*
- **A CALM ROOM:** Keep your room calm and quiet with the lights down low. *Loud noises and bright lights may upset your baby.*
- **FEED AT EARLY HUNGER CUES:** Feed your baby whenever they are hungry, until content, and at least every three hours. Breastfeed your baby unless you are unable to do so for medical reasons. *Do not try to keep the baby on a strict schedule. Frequent feedings help to console your baby.*
- **SUCKING:** If your baby still wants to suck after a good feeding, offer a pacifier. This can comfort them. *Always make sure your baby is not hungry first!*
- **LIMIT VISITORS:** Try to have only one or two visitors in your room at a time. *Having too many visitors may cause excess noise and activity, which may make your baby fussy or not sleep well.*

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,
PLEASE ASK YOUR BABY'S
NURSE OR PHYSICIAN.

MEDICATIONS

When cuddling, feeding and keeping your baby in a calm room is not enough to control symptoms of withdrawal, we may need to add medications, such as morphine, to help. However, the most important treatment for babies is having their parents with them as much as possible. If we have to use medicine, we try to use the lowest dose and give it for the shortest amount of time while still making sure that signs of withdrawal are controlled.

LENGTH OF STAY

If your baby does not need medication for treatment, they may be discharged from the hospital in three to five days. If your baby needs medication, they need to stay until symptoms improve and they can be weaned completely off the medication. This may require hospitalization for two to six weeks. Babies are not discharged home while they are still on the medication.

GOING HOME

Your baby's care team will help decide when it is safe for your baby to go home. Your baby is ready to go home when they:

- no longer need medication
- are feeding and sleeping well, and are easy to console (calm down)
- are growing or maintaining weight
- maintain a healthy temperature, heart rate and normal breathing
- have a referral for Early Intervention (EI) and/or a locally available developmental follow-up program
- have an appointment made with the pediatrician within one to two days after going home

Your medical team will work with social work for support and services, such as child protective services, as needed.

Some babies with NAS can be irritable for months, but symptoms should gradually improve with time. If you are concerned that your baby's symptoms are becoming more severe after you are home, please contact your pediatrician immediately.