

Premature Newborn Care: Not What I Expected

For parents of babies born early, there is suddenly so much to learn, and to feel. And all in unexpected surroundings. In the special care nursery, there are so many new faces to get to know and complicated medical terms and technology. No wonder most parents feel a wide range of emotions.

"It's hard to be a mom in the NICU, but the nurses and doctors make it a lot easier. They let you give the baths, and the bottles and you can be here whenever you want to be here. So that really helps."

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"It's scary, of course, it's scary. It's scary when you know they whisk her away. You're not sure the reasons why. If she's going to be okay. But I know I'm in good hands here, so I know she's in good hands."

For mothers, these intense feelings may follow major surgery and come at a time when hormones are shifting rapidly. It is natural for parents to experience feelings of fear and powerlessness, but as you become more comfortable with the NICU environment and interacting with your baby you will begin to feel more confident in your role as parents.

Remember to discuss your feelings with your baby's NICU staff. They can suggest ways for you to communicate with the NICU team and participate in your baby's care.