



When Your Baby's in the NICU



Overview

If your baby has been born early or needs special medical care, they may need to stay in the neonatal intensive care unit. We say "NICU." This is where your baby gets support while they grow and get stronger.

What is it like in the NICU?

What is it like in the NICU? Well, your baby is put in a plastic crib we call an "incubator." It keeps them warm, and it controls the humidity around them. It also helps protect them from germs. You may see tubes and wires connected to your baby. Some help the nurses and doctors see your baby's vital signs. Some may carry fluids and medicines. Some may carry air to help your baby breathe. So while these tubes and wires may look a bit scary, they are an important part of your baby's care.

Interacting with your baby

Even when your baby is in the NICU, you will have time to interact with and bond with them. You may be able to stroke their skin and talk to them. You may be able to hold and cuddle them. And, you may be able to bathe your baby. The NICU nurses will let you know what's safe.

Conclusion

A NICU stay can be a stressful time for everyone. Remember to take care of your own needs, too. And if you feel sad, depressed or overwhelmed, tell someone so you can get the care you need.

