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Preterm Baby



Preterm baby when admitted to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) may have problems the following problems:

IMMEDIATE:

Breathing issue

- Not able to breath – require help at birth.
- May need ventilation for support as lungs are not mature
- May need to give surfactant which will expand the lungs.
- As the lungs are immature may need to transfer on ventilator.
- Some babies develop chronic lung disease which may require oxygen for long time.

Infections

There are babies having low immune system and are prone for infections, which may be bacterial or fungal. Parents must wash hands before entering the NICU. Hand washing is very important for prevention of infection.

Nutrition

Baby can't be fed and so may require total Parental nutrition.

Necrotizing entero colitis (N.E.C.)

Babies cannot tolerate feeds and need Mother's expressed milk only. Sometimes while increasing the amount of milk or even without they may develop infection of intestine which may be very serious.

Intraventricular hemorrhage IVH/ Periventricular Leukomalacia

The baby's brain blood vessels are immature so may develop IVH/PVL. They need to be monitored by ultrasound of the brain on day 1, 3, 7, 14 and as and when required.

Anaemia

They may need packed cells for anaemia which may happen due to prematurity, blood investigation and infection.

Retinopathy of Prematurity (R.O.P).

- Preterm babies are at increased risk of visual problem.
- All preterm less than 33 weeks gestation or less than 1500 gm will undergo ROP screening.
- Eye examination will start at 4 weeks of age.
- Repeat screening will be done at 1, 2, 3 weekly interval till baby reaches expected date of delivery.
- Screening will be done by a trained ophthalmologist and require instillation of eye drops to dilate the eyes.(4-5% of preterm babes may develop ROP and some may require treatment in the form of laser photo coagulation.)

Signs to watch for sick Babies after discharge from NICU)

- decreased interest in feeding
- not passed urine for more than 12 hours'
- Increased sleepiness for more than 6 hours.
- hands and feet cold to touch despite of wrapping
- Yellow colored vomitus, abdominal distension.
- abnormal movement
- color change to dusky or blue

Advantages of Kangaroo Mother Care

- Skin to skin contact
- Promotes breast feeding.
- Promotes bonding between mother and baby
- Aim to do Kangaroo Mother Care for as many times as possible each day.
- Continue KMC till baby reaches term/2.5kg