



Dear Birthplace Parent/Caregiver,

Congratulations from Stormont Vail Health! 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 fewer problems when they are cared for by their family. It has been shown that babies need less medical treatment and may go home faster when their parents provide care and comfort. We also know that a quiet environment can help. If possible, we would like to keep you and your baby together during the hospital stay. This might be on the Birthplace or in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). After delivery, we will monitor your baby. This is what you can expect:

1. Your baby will stay with you on the Birthplace initially unless there are other reasons that would warrant a transfer to the NICU.
2. In order to know if your baby is experiencing NAS, the nurses will evaluate using a tool called the NAS scoring tool. The tool helps us look for things like restlessness, excessive jitteriness, excessive yawning, sweating, diarrhea, to name a few.
3. The monitoring process usually starts about 4 hours after your baby is born and we will re-score the assessment approximately every 2 – 4 hours, often near feeding time. It really helps if you take part in the scoring process so we will provide you with a copy of the scoring tool and you will be able to work with your nurse to complete the assessment.
4. We will usually monitor your baby for 3 to 5 days, depending on the type of drug/medication that was used during your pregnancy. Your doctor and nurse will be able to explain the specific plan for your baby and answer any questions you might have..
5. Sometimes, babies with NAS need medications to address the symptoms of NAS. If your baby needs those medications, he or she will be transferred to the NICU. The NICU has private patient rooms to continue to provide a quiet environment in which you can continue to care for your baby.
6. If the baby is placed on medication for NAS, 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 contact for your baby.
 - Place baby in a swaddle sac. This will provide comfort when baby is not skin-to-skin.
 - Keep the room lights dim.
 - Keep the room noise low.
 - Limit visitors.
 - Breastfeed, unless you are told not to by a medical provider

- **Observe your baby’s NAS symptoms and record in your “Baby’s symptom diary” how often your baby:**
 - Feeds
 - Has a wet diaper
 - Sneezes
 - Awakens between feedings
 - Cries more than usual
 - Seems 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 transferred to NICU
 - 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 that meets specific criteria
 - If you have questions or need help, we are here to help you.

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.