

## The Intensive Care Nursery (ICN)

The following information describes the ICN at Grey Bruce Health Services.



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### Intensive Care Nursery (ICN)

If your baby requires special care, he/she will be admitted to the Intensive Care Nursery (ICN). Our ICN is a Level II, which means that we can provide specialized care for sick infants, but do not have the ability to provide all the care of a Level III NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). If your baby requires the care of a Level III NICU, he/she will likely be transported to London, Toronto or Hamilton. You will be involved in making decisions about your baby's care and will be informed if such a transport is necessary.

If you are returning to us from your Level III NICU stay, you will notice some differences. A Level III NICU provides very close monitoring of infants who need a lot of care. As your infant moves to a Level II ICN, such as ours, you'll notice that one nurse may have several infants to care for. These infants are learning to grow, resting and/or receiving antibiotics.

All nurses working in the ICN are trained to look after babies who require special care. A paediatrician is available "on call" 24 hours a day, but is not usually in the hospital overnight. Generally, our paediatricians make rounds in the ICN in the morning. If you want to discuss something with the paediatrician, tell the nurse and arrange to be there when the doctor is available.

Other specialized staff such as social workers, dieticians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and lactation consultants are available during the week to help you and your baby if the need arises. Please ask the ICN nurses to make arrangements for these services.

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## Visiting in the ICN

Parents, your support person, grandparents and the baby's brothers and sisters are welcome to visit in the ICN. We ask that only two people stay at your baby's bedside at a time. Parents are encouraged to come into the ICN or call any time, however please note that our nursing shifts change at 7:00 am and 7:00 pm, and these are busy times. We ask that you not visit during shift change to minimize disruption to patients and maintain patient privacy. The telephone number for the ICN is (519) 376-2121 ext. 2315.

Please be aware that sometimes visitors to ICN will be asked to leave the unit unexpectedly. This could be because the ICN has become very busy, a doctor needs to discuss important care issues with a family, or a critically ill baby has been admitted. You will be able to come back into ICN as soon as possible.

## Protecting Your Baby in ICN

All babies entering the ICN after staying in another hospital will have a nasal swab done and sent to the lab. These swabs are done to ensure infections are not brought from one hospital to another.

Each person entering the ICN must wash their hands before entering the room, after caring for their infant, and before leaving ICN. You will be screened by your baby's nurse to make sure you are feeling well and not currently sick with any contagious illnesses before visiting in the ICN. Anyone with a fever, cough, influenza-like symptoms, a runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea, a rash, or conjunctivitis should not visit the ICN. Anyone who has been exposed to any contagious illnesses such as chicken pox or measles should not visit the ICN. It is very important to make sure all visitors to the ICN are fully vaccinated. If there is a local outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness, you will need to show your immunization card before visiting the ICN.

For infection control reasons, yellow gowns are worn by the nurses when holding your baby, since they will be holding several different infants over the course of their shift. Generally you won't need to wear a yellow gown, since you will only be near your own baby. If for any reason you do need to wear a yellow gown, your baby's nurse will give you special instructions.

Please do not smoke before a visit to the ICN. We also ask that you do not wear perfume or any scented products into the ICN. Please leave your jacket outside of the room.

# The Intensive Care Nursery (ICN)

## Caring for Your Baby in ICN

We encourage and support you to take an active part in your baby's care. Please keep us aware of what you feel comfortable doing for your baby. We will help you to care for your baby as much as the baby's condition permits. As you get more comfortable in the ICN, let the nurses know when you are ready to give more care, such as bathing your baby and checking your baby's temperature. Our ultimate goal is that, by working together with you, your baby will be welcomed home soon.

## Skin-to-Skin, or Kangaroo Care

You may have only had a quick look at your baby before he/she came to the ICN. This separation may be difficult for you. Our ICN encourages mothers and/or their support people to provide "skin-to-skin" care (also known as kangaroo care) to their babies. This means you hold your baby, who is dressed only in a diaper, against your bare chest and cover both of you with a blanket. Skin-to-skin has been shown to be very beneficial for babies by helping them with weight gain, helping to improve their vital signs, and assisting with breastfeeding. Skin-to-skin care can be started as soon as your baby is stable. Your doctor and nurses will help you decide when it's time to start skin-to-skin. Each time you visit, you can ask the nurse to help you hold your baby skin-to-skin before starting a feeding. Your baby may begin to make sucking and rooting movements towards your breast. This is a wonderful way to introduce your baby to breastfeeding.

## Feeding Your Baby in ICN

The nurses are trained in assisting you with breastfeeding and/or bottle feeding when your baby is ready. Breast pump kits are available for purchase in the hospital outpatient pharmacy (located inside the gift shop). There are electric pumps that attach to the breast pump kits. These electric pumps are available in ICN and we encourage you to use one while you are here. If you own a breast pump kit, please bring it with you to the hospital. Unfortunately, the hospital does not have a breast pump kit that you can borrow. You must purchase a pump if you need one. If you need more information on breast pumps, please speak to your ICN nurse or the lactation consultant.

Babies are weighed nightly and this weight is recorded on a chart next to the baby's bed. Please keep track of your baby's weight so that you can share in the excitement of watching your baby grow bigger and stronger!

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## Hearing Screening Test and Car Seat Challenge

Your baby will likely have a hearing screening test before going home and may have a car seat challenge assessment if he/she meets the criteria. Your nurse will keep you informed of these.

## Parent Visiting Room and Mothers' Room

The Parent Visiting Room is located next to the ICN. This is a quiet place where families can spend some time together or mothers can go for a quiet place to pump their breasts. This room is available to all our families with babies in ICN. We welcome you to use it. Please keep in mind that it is shared with others.

The Mothers' Room is located down the hall from ICN. For a \$25.00 daily fee, the shared, 2-bed room may be used by two mothers with infants in ICN. Keep in mind there is only Mother's Room, so it can be busy. Breastfeeding mothers with babies likely to be discharged soon have priority to the Mothers' Room. Arrangements for this room can be made through the ICN nurse.

## Care-by-Parent

You may be asked to come and stay with your baby at the hospital for one or two nights before your baby is discharged home. This is called "Care-by-Parent." Your baby will be transferred to the paediatric unit, and you will stay while providing your baby's care. Your baby will have a nurse assigned to help you if you need it. This time with your baby will help you feel confident that you know how to care for your baby when you go home. Your baby's nurse will let you know in advance when Care-By-Parent is being planned so that you can make arrangements to stay at the hospital with your baby.

If you have any questions or concerns during your baby's hospital stay, please speak with an ICN nurse, your baby's doctor, or the manager of the ICN at 519-376-2121 ext. 2952.

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