

NICU Parent and Family Guide

To Our Patients and Family Caregivers,

Welcome to the Ochsner Baptist Neonatal Intensive Care Unit!

Having a baby is one of the most exciting and joyous moments in life. However, complications may occur which require special care provided in the NICU. We are here to meet your baby's special needs and support you through this difficult time. Some babies require specialized care for a short time, while others may remain for many weeks.

At Ochsner, we have assembled a highly trained team that works together to take care of the most critical neonatal patients.

As a parent, you are a vital part of our team. We want you to be involved in your baby's care as much as possible. This will initiate the bonding process and help your baby thrive.

Rounds occur daily with the care team where we will discuss your baby's progress and plan of care. Parents are invited to attend rounds daily. Visitors may be asked to leave during this time. We have a charge nurse and a social worker available at all times, should any special needs arise.

Our team will assist you in any way possible during your baby's stay with us. Thank you for entrusting your care to Ochsner. We look forward to providing the quality care and service you expect and deserve.

Ochsner NICU: 504-842-3650 Your baby's passcode: _____



Your baby is receiving care at Ochsner Baptist's Level 4 NICU.

As your baby grows and gets healthier, they may graduate from this Level 4 NICU. We will transfer your baby to a Level 2 or 3 NICU within the Ochsner system or closer to your home. Rest assured, your baby will get the same excellent care at our partner hospitals. We will work with you and the clinical team to make this a smooth transition.

- **Level 1 NICU - Basic Care Nursery**

Level I NICUs are standard nurseries that provide care for healthy, full-term babies. They also stabilize near-term babies to get them ready to be moved to specialized facilities.

- **Level 2 NICU - Advanced Care**

Level II NICUs offer care for babies born at or after 32 weeks and babies who are recovering from more serious health problems.

- **Level 3 NICU - Specialized Care**

Level III NICUs care for very sick babies generally born earlier than 32 weeks or have critical illnesses. They provide a wide range of pediatric specialists and equipment, such as x-rays and ventilation support.

- **Level 4 NICU - Complex Care**

Level IV NICUs provide the highest level of neonatal intensive care. They have a full range of healthcare providers, including pediatric subspecialists, nurses and equipment to care for very sick babies.

Table of Contents

Your NICU Care Team1

Important Care Policies.....2

 Hand Washing

 Hand Sanitizers

 Communication

 Nursing Change of Shift

 Room Guidelines

 Bonding

 Staying Overnight in Your Baby’s Room

 Visitation Guidelines

 Test Results

MyOchsner5

Family Services6

 Dining and Vending Machines

 Lodging

 Parent Lounge (Kitchen)

 NICU Webcam

Participate in the Care of Your Baby.....8

 Ways to Provide Care

 Before Going Home

Tell Us About Your Experience.....10

Notes.....11

Your NICU Team

Specialized care for your baby consists of a multidisciplinary care team of dedicated healthcare professionals.

- **Neonatologist or Hospitalist**

The doctor who will oversee your baby's plan of care

- **Neonatal Nurse Practitioner (NNP)**

An advanced practice nurse working with the doctor and making decisions for your baby's care

- **Neonatal Nurse**

A Registered Nurse who performs bedside cares for your baby

- **Respiratory Therapist**

Responsible for any oxygen therapy

- **Occupational Therapist**

Assists with development, feeding, and stretching exercises

- **Speech Therapist**

Helps your baby improve skills to ensure they feed and swallow safely

- **Physical Therapist**

Provides exercises and activities to promote your baby's development

- **Comfort Care Nurses**

Supports families of babies who need complex care

- **Social Worker**

Helps families cope and coordinates support services

- **Lactation Consultant**

Assists with all breastfeeding pumping needs and support

- **Discharge Coordinator**

Oversees CPR, appointments, and any home care discharge needs

Some other team members you may come in contact with include Registered Dietitian, Volunteers, and Specialty Doctors.



Important Care Policies

While your baby is in the Ochsner NICU, it is critical that your family and visitors follow these policies.

Hand Washing

- **This is the most important thing we all must do to keep your baby healthy.**
- Everyone entering the unit must wash from elbows to fingertips for 20 seconds with warm soapy water.
- All bulky jewelry must be removed.
- Wash hands with soap and water after diaper changes or if visibly soiled.



Hand Sanitizer

- Must be used before touching your baby.
- Must be used after touching personal items, such as cell-phones, cameras, and purses.

Communication

- Your baby's passcode can be found on the first page of this guide. It is required when you call to check on your baby.
- Only parents may receive information about their baby over the phone. This requires your baby's passcode.
- No information will be given without your baby's passcode.



Do not share your baby's passcode with anyone; this is for parents only.

Nursing Change of Shift

- Nursing change of shift occurs twice per day: 6:30-7:30 AM and 6:30-7:30 PM.
- The NICU will be closed to parents and visitors during bedside report. This includes phone calls from parents.

Room Guidelines

- No food or drink is allowed in the NICU.
- Only breastfeeding mothers may bring water into your baby's room. Water must be in a container with a lid.



Talking on a cell phone is only permitted in the Family Waiting Area.

- Cell phones may be used for texting and taking pictures.
- Electronic devices must be on silent or used with earphones only.
- Profanity, sexual, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Your baby's room assignment depends upon the medical care that your baby requires.
- Items that touch baby cannot be placed in the windowsill.
- Limit the number of items so they do not obstruct your baby's care.
- You may take and bring family photos.
- You may bring spiritual items to place in the room.
- You may bring clothes or blankets (must be kept in a closed container).
- You may bring swings, bouncy seats, or mobiles (when age appropriate).
- Latex balloons and live plants or flowers are not allowed.
- You may bring small stuffed animals and mementos into your baby's room.

Staying Overnight in Your Baby's Room

- **Only one parent may sleep overnight** in your baby's room on the sofa or recliner.
- Linens will be available. The parent staying overnight is responsible for placing used linens in the bin and returning sofa/chair to upright position by 6:30 AM.
- Personal items such as blankets and bags must be kept in cabinets.

When you're at the bedside, day or night, we encourage you to participate in caring for your baby if their condition allows.



NICU patient room

Visitation Guidelines

Parents are allowed to visit their baby anytime except during shift report which is 6:30-7:30 AM and 6:30-7:30 PM. Upon arriving to the unit, use the phone outside the double doors to request visitation.



Do not enter without permission, push through the doors, or hold the door open for other visitors.

- Everyone entering the NICU must show a photo ID or birth wristband.
- Everyone must sign-in and sign-out at each visit.
- Everyone will receive a "Visitors Name Tag" that should be visible during your visit with your baby.
- Each baby can have 2 visitors at a time.
- Parents may bring any visitor age 12 and older.

Designated Visitors

- Parents can designate 4 visitors on the Visitor Identification Form for those who may visit without the parents.
- You are responsible for visitors' behavior during your baby's stay.
- Visitors may not bring in any additional people.
- Visitors will not receive any information about your baby.
- Visitors cannot be changed during your baby's stay.
- We may ask visitors to leave if they show any signs of illness or if the activity is too much for your baby.
- Lingering in the hallway is not permitted. Please wait in the Family Waiting Room.
- If you do not wish to have visitors present while being updated on your baby's status, let the nurse know and visitors will be asked to step out.
- Visitors may not talk on cell phones while in patient rooms. Texting and picture taking is allowed.
- **We may revoke visiting rights of anyone who does not comply with these guidelines.** This is to ensure consistency of patient care and to keep everyone safe.

Siblings and Children



Parents are responsible for the behavior of visiting children. Disruptive children will not be tolerated. This is for the safety of your baby.

- Brothers and sisters must be at least 3 years old to visit except from October 1 through March 31. During this time, visitors must be age 12 and older due to risk of flu or RSV, a harmful respiratory virus.
- All children will be screened for signs of illness upon entry.
- Siblings may not stay overnight.
- Young children may be overwhelmed by the sights and sounds of our unit. Their visits should be short based on their attention span.

Test Results

The **21st Century Cures Act** is a U.S. federal law designed to give patients timely and secure access to health information.

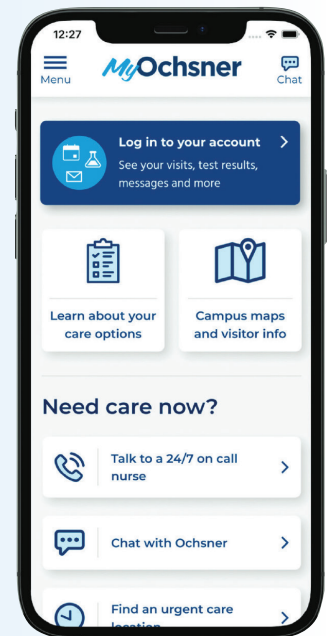
- This law means your baby's test results are released to you as soon as they are available.
- In many cases, you may receive results prior to speaking with the provider. These results are released as soon as they are available so you may receive frequent notifications.
- Please know there is always someone available on our team to receive and process these results. All results are immediately reviewed by the team and will be discussed with you as appropriate.
- Some of these results will be listed with normal or abnormal values. Many of the results labeled abnormal may be normal for a baby in the NICU.
- As we work together on your NICU journey, our team will do their best to educate you about each diagnosis and answer your questions concerning your baby's condition and test results.



MyOchsner is our secure, online patient portal. With a MyOchsner account, you can schedule appointments, view test results and communicate with your providers. The MyOchsner app places all the same information at your fingertips through your phone or other mobile device.

- If you need help linking your MyOchsner account to your baby's, ask a member of our nursing team or social work team.
- If you don't already have a MyOchsner account, you can create one at www.Ochsner.org. Click the MyOchsner logo in the top right corner on the home page. Ask a member of our nursing team or social work team if you need help.
- If you have questions, send an email to myochsner@ochsner.org or call toll-free 1-877-339-2637.

MyOchsner should not be used for urgent medical needs.



Family Services

Ochsner Baptist offers many services for the convenience of our patients' family members.

Dining and Vending Machines

Café de Lis is located on the first floor of the hospital building and is open Monday through Friday for breakfast and lunch. Snacks may be purchased 24 hours a day in vending machines located on the 2nd and 6th floors. PJ's Coffee is located on the 2nd floor of the McFarland building. They are open Monday through Friday.

Lodging

Alder Hotel
504-207-4600
alderhotel.com

Located next to the Ochsner Baptist Campus, this hotel offers accommodations and related services.

Ochsner Brent House Hotel
504-835-5411 or toll free 1-800-535-3986
brenthouse.com

A full-service hotel located at 1512 Jefferson Highway, 10 minutes from Ochsner Baptist.

Ronald McDonald House
504-486-6668
rmhc-sla.org

Provides temporary residence for families of children receiving medical care in New Orleans. Referrals must be made by your social worker and family must live more than 25 miles away from the hospital.

Parent Lounge (Kitchen)

We provide a lounge for "parents only" to store and prepare your meals. You should label food items with date and your baby's room number. Items left over 48 hours will be discarded. Ochsner is not responsible for lost or discarded food. Water is available. Please clean behind yourself.



NICU Webcam

A free webcam service is available so families with Internet access can watch their new baby from any computer or mobile device.

- Individual cameras mounted in the NICU provide real-time viewing securely over the Internet and give parents and families peace of mind.
- After consent is signed, you will be given a username and password for access on www.nicview.net. These cannot be changed. Parents are responsible for whom they give the username and password.
- The camera will be on intermittently. Our goal is to have it available as much as possible.
- **Do not be alarmed if the camera is turned off at times.** This may happen when we are caring for your baby. It will be turned back on as soon as possible.
- The NICU webcam system does not store any video or patient information. It is illegal to record or copy this video.



Technical problems? Contact
Nicview customer support
at 1-855-642-8439 or
www.nicview.net/help.



Participate in the Care of Your Baby

We understand how difficult it is to be separated from your baby. We encourage you to help care for your baby as their condition allows. We will let you know when your baby is ready and will help you both become comfortable with:

- **Kangaroo Care**

A special way to bond with skin-to-skin contact between parent and child

- **Breastfeeding**

Mothers are encouraged to pump at your baby's bedside, or in our private pumping room. Space is available for breast milk storage.

- **Providing Care**

When your baby is ready, you may participate in bathing, diaper changes, feeding, holding and spending time with your baby.



Kangaroo Care

Kangaroo Care, also known as skin-to-skin, is a special way to hold your premature baby while in the hospital. The baby will be naked except for a diaper and hat or head covering, and will be placed on your bare chest. Either parent can do skin-to-skin. To keep warm, the baby needs to be covered with a blanket or your clothing as they rest on your chest.

Why is Kangaroo Care good for baby and you?

- Heart rate and breathing become steady
- Oxygen level in blood may get better
- Keeps baby warm
- Baby sleeps longer
- Baby grows better
- Increases mother's milk supply
- Baby is more eager to breastfeed
- Special private time with your baby
- Helps you feel more comfortable caring for your baby

How is it done?

Kangaroo Care is done at your baby's bedside. The monitor and other medical equipment will stay connected to your baby. The bedside nurse will place the baby on your chest. The nurse will check on you during Kangaroo Care to make sure your baby stays warm and is doing well.



You may feel a little nervous about holding your infant skin to skin, but we are here to help you. You are giving your baby something very special that only you can offer. It is good for both you and your baby.

We ask that you spend at least 60 minutes each day holding your infant skin to skin. It is easier if you wear a shirt that can be opened in the front. If needed, we can give you a patient gown to change into. This will be a special time for your baby to rest and grow.

When can I start Kangaroo Care?

Ask the bedside nurse if your baby is ready for Kangaroo Care each time you visit. Your baby's condition can change every day. There are very few exclusions to Kangaroo Care.

Providing Care

When your baby is ready, you may participate in bathing, diaper changes, feeding, holding, and spending time with your baby. You may notice we do these things at certain times and there may be a lot of activity when you're helping care for your baby.

This is because we provide what's called "clustered care" in the NICU. Clustered care means we do things like check vital signs, change diapers, give medication, and make assessments all together at certain times. This gives your baby more uninterrupted time to rest, grow and develop. Clustered care also helps prevent infection and lowers stress in premature babies.

Safety

- No sleeping while holding baby. Staff may ask you to place baby back in bed.
- Side rails must be up and secure when not being attended.
- While in bouncy seat or swing, baby must be properly secured.
- DO NOT touch medical equipment.

Before Going Home

Prior to discharge, you will be asked to room-in with your baby overnight or for several nights. **You will be responsible for all feedings and other care during this time** and the team will serve as a resource for any teaching needs. You will also be responsible for all of your meals, personal overnight items (hygiene products), and an alarm clock to wake up for feedings. The goal is for you to become comfortable caring for your baby.

When your baby is admitted, we will begin teaching you how to care for them when they go home. Depending on your baby's needs, these lessons may come from a nurse, discharge coordinator or doctor. You may also receive information on your baby's care from lactation, dietary, occupational therapy or social services professionals.



For your baby to be discharged, the following milestones must be met:

- feeding well by bottle or G-tube
- gaining weight
- maintaining temperature in an open crib
- breathing regularly without heart rate or oxygen levels dropping
- requiring very little to no oxygen support

We will keep you updated as your baby is nearing discharge so that you may plan accordingly. **We strongly recommend that you take our CPR class before discharge.** Ask your nurse about the CPR class schedule as soon as possible so you can plan to attend.

You must choose a pediatrician before leaving the hospital. Our discharge coordinator will help you schedule follow-up appointments and obtain medications. Also, some babies will need to be tested in their car seats before going home. A staff member will let you know when to bring in your car seat for testing. Be sure to check your car seat's minimum weight requirement to be sure it will accommodate your baby.

Tell Us About Your Experience

At Ochsner, we are committed to listening to our patients and learning from their experiences. We believe that your feedback, whether it's a compliment or complaint, is an opportunity for us to learn and to improve the quality of the care that we provide to our patients. We want to have a relationship with you based on a mutual respect, dignity, and trust. Our processes are based on knowledge, collaboration, and fairness.



For any concerns or complaints, please speak with a member of your health-care team, your primary nurse, the charge nurse, the nursing unit manager or director, your social worker, or your treating physician. You may also contact our Patient Relations Department at 504-894-2908.

Feedback FAQs

Who should I contact regarding a complaint, compliment, or comment regarding an aspect of the care I or my baby received at Ochsner?

We suggest that where possible, you share your feedback with a member of the team involved in your care or with the unit manager. If this is not possible, you may contact Ochsner Patient and Provider Advocacy by phone, in writing through mail, or in person.

What can I expect if I make a complaint?

You can expect to be treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. You can expect to be able to speak openly and freely about your concerns and will be asked to tell your story from your perspective. A member of the Ochsner Patient and Provider Advocacy team will explain the hospital's complaint process to you.

I am afraid that if I complain, things will be worse for me or my family. Can this happen?

It is understandably natural to feel that way. We look at feedback as an opportunity to improve the care we provide to our patients. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated at any time.

Notes

We hope the information in this guide is helpful. If you have additional questions, write them down in this section and ask your baby's doctor, nurse or any of the NICU staff. Our staff is here to offer assistance to you during your baby's stay.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Ochsner Baptist Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
504-842-3650

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