NICU Parent’s Guide
Congratulations on the arrival of your new baby!

The experience of having your baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) may have its “ups and downs” and may take some time to adjust. The number of babies, rows of beds, maze of medical equipment and the constant noise of monitors can be overwhelming.

Remember, even though your newborn is in the hospital and cared for by others, this is your baby and we welcome your involvement and participation with the care.

Common questions to ask the nursing staff include:
- How do I get information about my baby?
- When can I visit?
- Can siblings or other guests visit?
- What guidelines should I follow to help keep the NICU healthy?
- Are there support groups or resources on campus?

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

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The information contained herein is provided for educational and informational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice and treatment or consultation with qualified physicians and other health care professionals regarding your individual needs. The March of Dimes is not engaged in rendering medical advice or recommendations. Some of the information provided herein was written by individual health care providers and may not represent the views or opinions of the March of Dimes.
PARENTS AND THE NICU

Staff of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) encourages you to spend time with your baby as often as possible. You are considered part of the care team.

When can I visit the NICU?
The NICU welcomes parents and family 24 hours a day.

What is needed for me to enter the NICU?
The ID band that you receive when the baby is born. Parent badges are available at the main NICU desk. They give access to the NICU entrance and will serve as a parking badge. These badges are $5. Badges are not required, but strongly encouraged. Without a badge, you can ask a staff person at the desk to allow you access.

When can I be with my baby?
You are encouraged to spend as much time as you can with your baby. This time will give you a better understanding of your baby’s needs.

What if I have the sniffles?
If you or your guests have the sniffles or allergy type symptoms, they can actually be a viral infection. If this is the case, please stay home and take care of yourself. Babies in the NICU can get sick very easily, and the staff wants to protect them from infections. If you have concerns or questions, feel free to talk to your baby’s nurse.

How do I get information about my baby?
The NICU can be a very overwhelming place for families so ask questions. The staff makes every effort to keep you updated on the condition of your baby. Health information about your baby is only shared with parents. Please refer questions about your baby’s care to the attending physician, nurse or respiratory therapist.

If you are calling for condition updates from home:
You can call 24 hours a day. Staff will ask you for the baby’s medical ID number. Your nurse can provide the direct number for the nursery, or you can call the main desk at 214-345-2647.

May I use my cell phone or laptop computer in the NICU?
Yes. However, please silence your phone as many babies are sensitive to the noise. Also please wash your hands or use gel after using one of these devices. Computers, a printer and a fax machine are located in the family lounge.
VISITORS IN THE NICU

Who can visit my baby?
Anyone over the age of 16 is allowed as long as they are accompanied by a parent. Siblings of any age are allowed, however specific rules are listed below. We ask that no more than two visitors be present, with the parents, at a time. Grandparents may visit without the parents except from 6:30-7:30 a.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m., when nurses are changing shifts and giving report to one another. We ask that grandparents not bring their own visitors.

How many people can visit at a time?
We ask that no more than two visitors be present, with the parents, at a time. There is a family lounge outside the NICU where additional visitors can wait.

When can guests visit my baby?
Visitors may visit at any time with the parents, except from 6:30-7:30 a.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Can siblings visit?
Yes. Whenever your children visit, you will be asked a few questions about their health, and we will take their temperature to make sure they do not have a fever. If siblings are visiting and need a break from the bedside, they may spend time in the family lounge as long as there is an adult present to supervise them. Please note that during RSV and flu season, the regulations will change, so ask your baby’s nurse for more information.
WHO IS CARING FOR MY BABY?

Although you may be afraid to be away from your baby, know that your baby is in good hands with compassionate staff that will support you and your family during your baby's stay in the NICU. The nurses and physicians on the medical staff are deeply committed to working closely with you to develop a care plan for your baby. You are likely to meet most of these healthcare professionals during your baby’s time in the NICU.

**Neonatologists** are pediatric doctors specifically trained to care for sick and premature newborns in a hospital setting. There are a number of neonatologists who rotate through the NICU. They will manage your baby’s care until discharge. A neonatologist is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Neonatal Nurses** provide 24-hour bedside care throughout your baby’s hospitalization. These nurses are experienced and have received extensive training to work with sick babies. They are the persons with whom you will have the most contact and the greatest opportunity to discuss your baby’s progress.

**Respiratory Therapists** in the NICU are trained to take care of babies with breathing problems. It is especially important for them to care for babies in the NICU because premature babies’ lungs are not fully developed. They also provide care to babies that require medical equipment to help them breathe.

**Social Workers** will meet with you to provide assistance, support and referrals for dealing with the stress of having a baby in the NICU. The social worker can also assist you with any financial, emotional and family concerns. For issues of lodging and transportation, the social worker can act as a referral for you while your baby is in the NICU.

**Lactation Consultants** are health care professionals experienced in teaching you how to breastfeed your baby. The lactation consultant’s primary role is to provide you with education, assistance and support while you gain confidence in breastfeeding your baby.

**Registered Dieticians** monitor what your baby is fed and how well they are growing. These dieticians are trained in infant nutrition, including human milk, vitamin and mineral supplements, and infant formulas. At the time of discharge, they will assist the physician and nurses in helping you provide your baby with the appropriate diet to meet nutritional needs.

**Occupational Therapists** focus on providing appropriate developmental care for preterm infants. Developmental care includes positioning to help babies remain in a calm state, providing gentle range of motion, touch and vestibular input, as well as parent education. They also provide early intervention for infants that have special needs such as Down Syndrome, spina bifida or other diagnoses that can cause infants to have developmental delays.

**PACT (Palliative Care Team)** is an interdisciplinary team to support your family should your baby have complex medical needs. The team assists in advanced care planning and care coordination. Ask your physician or nurse.

**Chaplains** are available to meet with you to offer spiritual and emotional support. Although a chaplain is trained to work with people of all faiths, you may wish to have the chaplain facilitate a visit from a minister of your own tradition. The chaplain is also a resource person who can work with you as you consider baptism, anointing or other spiritual services.
NICU EQUIPMENT

Perhaps the most intimidating part of having a baby in the NICU is all of the unfamiliar equipment and procedures in the neonatal intensive care unit. Although it may be overwhelming at times, remember the equipment is there to help your baby get well.

### Monitoring Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Equipment</th>
<th>What It Looks Like</th>
<th>What It Is Doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac Monitor</td>
<td>stickers on the chest connected to wires</td>
<td>Makes sure that baby’s heart is beating at the correct speed and with the correct rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Monitor</td>
<td>stickers on the chest connected to wires</td>
<td>Monitors the baby’s breathing rate and pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulse oximeter</td>
<td>wrap around your baby’s wrist or foot and have a red light</td>
<td>Monitors the amount of oxygen in the blood.</td>
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### IV Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Equipment</th>
<th>What It Looks Like</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral IVs</td>
<td>Tubes running from the infant’s feet, hands, arms or scalps that may connect to a bag of fluid</td>
<td>Deliver medications or fluids directly into the infant’s veins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICC/Central Lines</td>
<td>PICC lines are inserted into an arm / leg or inserted in the neck or groin</td>
<td>They have longer catheters, or tubes, than regular IVs and travel through the vein into the large veins that empty into the heart. Insertion of these lines is one of the procedures NICU babies commonly undergo. These are inserted by specially trained nurses within the unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbilical Catheters</td>
<td>A tube inserted into the umbilical cord</td>
<td>These are inserted into the umbilical cord stump and travel to the large veins and arteries near the heart. Umbilical lines may be inserted into an artery in the umbilical cord, a vein in the umbilical cord, or both, to allow fluid and medication administrations, blood pressure monitoring, painless blood sampling and other procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral Arterial Lines (PAL)</td>
<td>A small catheter inserted into a peripheral artery</td>
<td>Used to monitor blood pressure and obtain blood specimens.</td>
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## Respiratory Equipment

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nasal Cannulas</td>
<td>set of small nasal prongs</td>
<td>They deliver a higher concentration of oxygen than room air and also provide air at a higher flow, which helps to keep airways open and encourage babies to breathe on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure)</td>
<td>a mask or a special set of nasal prongs placed firmly on baby’s nose</td>
<td>The constant pressure encourages open airways and reminds babies to breathe. Higher concentrations of oxygen may be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventilators</td>
<td>A special tube is placed in the airway through the mouth or nose</td>
<td>The ventilator is the machine that delivers breaths to babies who cannot breathe on their own or who don’t breathe well. If a baby is put on a ventilator with a breathing tube, the procedure is called intubation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Other Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Equipment</th>
<th>What It Looks Like</th>
<th>What It Is Doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeding Tubes</td>
<td>A feeding tube travels from the mouth or from the nose to the stomach</td>
<td>Infants who are too sick or weak to eat from the breast or from a bottle receive food through these tubes. Inserting the tubes and giving feedings through them are common procedures among premature babies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolettes</td>
<td>plexiglass bed</td>
<td>This box is an incubator that protects the baby from temperature fluctuations in the room and will adjust to the baby’s unique needs. It has portholes on the sides for medical staff to reach through in order to provide different treatments, diaper changes, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phototherapy or Bili Lights</td>
<td>A bright white or blue light shining onto the baby</td>
<td>Preemies are more likely to have problems from jaundice. Phototherapy lights, also called bili lights, are special lights that help the baby’s body break down bilirubin, the chemical that causes jaundice.</td>
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BREASTFEEDING IN THE NICU

Providing for your baby’s nutrition is very important but breastfeeding in the NICU can be challenging. Whether you are pumping or breastfeeding directly, the NICU staff wants to support you. Any amount of milk you can provide is a huge benefit to your baby.

Breastfeeding support
Certified lactation consultants work in the NICU and are available to provide individual breastfeeding education and help. NICU staff will encourage you to begin breastfeeding your baby directly when he/she is ready. You may practice this at your baby’s bedside. Ask your baby’s nurse or lactation consultant for assistance.

Request a pumping kit
A pumping kit is available that includes the parts necessary to use the hospital’s breast pumps. If you have not received a kit, please ask your nurse or the lactation consultant.

Where can I pump?
Private rooms in the NICU are available specifically for pumping your milk. The rooms have hospital-grade breast pumps and special supplies, such as collection bottles available for your convenience. You may also pump at your baby’s bedside if you request, which may help increase the amount of milk you make. There are privacy curtains at every bedside. Please ask your baby’s nurse to assist you.

Storing milk at the NICU
The NICU can keep some of your frozen breast milk on hand as space allows. You will need to store the rest at home. Staff will let you know when they are running low on your milk. Your nurse can show you how to access the freezer.

Bringing your milk to the NICU
If you are pumping at home and bringing milk to the NICU, please bring it in an insulated bag or on ice. If it is frozen, we want it to remain frozen during transport.

Nuzzling
If your baby is stable enough, but too small to breastfeed, you can still practice skin-to-skin contact. Ask your nurse about nuzzling.

Renting or purchasing breast pumps or supplies
The Texas Health Prescription Shop pharmacy has Medela™ breast pumps, nursing supplies and pump parts available to rent. They can be delivered to your room prior to discharge. For more information and pricing, call 214-345-2595.

Online breastfeeding education
For more information, request a NICU specific breastfeeding guide from a lactation consultant. You can also visit TexasHealth.org/ebreastfeeding for more support on breastfeeding. Enter code THRBABY to access the eBreastfeeding Course.

Outpatient lactation appointments
Texas Health Dallas offers breastfeeding support for moms who have left the hospital. Certified Lactation Consultants offer outpatient help to educate and support families who may need assistance with the breastfeeding process. For more information, call 214-345-2557.
BONDING WITH YOUR BABY
You may find that with the activity that occurs once your baby is in the NICU, you have trouble knowing what you can and cannot do with your baby. The baby’s nurse and doctor are the best people to tell you what your baby can tolerate. However, listed below are some simple things that you can do to bond with your baby.

Visit often and participate
By visiting regularly, you will learn what your baby likes and doesn’t like. Read, sing and talk to your baby. Your baby will know your smell and voice quickly. Also, feel free to assist with changing diapers, bathing, dressing, feeding, calming, talking to and holding your baby. Find out from your nurse when these things happen during the day and night so you can be available to do them and learn.

Touching and holding
At first, touching may be too stimulating for your baby. Babies are comforted by your firm, steady touch. If your baby is very small, you can offer your finger for them to grasp or place their hand in yours. Remember a little goes a long way.

Sleep
Your baby needs uninterrupted sleep to grown. You can help make sure that your baby is getting good sleep by using a soft voice, keeping the lights low, and letting him/her sleep between feeding times without being disturbed.

Skin-to-Skin (Kangaroo Care)
Holding your diapered baby on your bare chest, skin-to-skin is a way for you to be close with your baby. Moms and dads can both do this. It helps regulate your baby’s breathing, helps keep your baby calm and relaxed, and helps the mother increase the amount of milk produced. You can change into a hospital gown or wear a button-down shirt to make Kangaroo Care (skin-to-skin) easier. You should plan to allow plenty of time, at least an hour, to hold your baby skin-to-skin.

Bring blankets and clothes
Bring blankets to swaddle your baby. Some babies find having their own blankets to be very comforting. Additionally, if your baby is able to wear clothes, bring whatever baby clothes you wish. Remember to write your baby’s name on the clothes, wash the clothes with baby or unscented detergent. Avoid white clothing as they can easily get mixed in with hospital linens. Please leave your heirloom pieces at home. If your baby is born premature, don’t purchase a large quantity of preemie clothes. Your baby will outgrow them quickly.

Scent cloths
The NICU provides a small cloth for you to keep by your baby when you are away. Smelling your scent helps comfort the baby when you are away.
PEEK-A-BOO SM NEONATAL ICU WEB CAM

The Peek-a-Boo℠ service at Texas Health Resources hospitals allows parents, designated family members and friends to view real-time video of their baby while in the NICU. This service is offered free of charge and may be available to you during your stay. We hope these cameras help to provide a good experience for our patients and their families, thanks to the philanthropic support of one of our grateful patients.

To log in to see your newborn, go to TexasHealth.org/CribCam

Who can view the babies?
Only people with authorized access such as parents, family members and NICU staff can view the video. Your baby can only be viewed over the Internet by you and the family and friends you allow to access the service.

How many user/family accounts can I create?
The baby’s parent has the ability to create 25 family and friend user accounts.

Do all the users have the ability to speak or sing to my baby?
No, only the primary account has the ability to use one-way audio. Additionally, it is only available to babies in a giraffe bed.

Will the video be on all the time while my baby is in the NICU?
No, a baby’s video could be off for a variety of reasons. It can be difficult to stream video during staff interactions with your baby, and there will be times when NICU staff turns the camera off. When this occurs, you will see the message: “The video system is currently offline. Please try back again later.” If your video remains offline for over an hour, please feel free to contact our nursery.

Who do I call if I am experiencing technical difficulties with the Peek-a-Boo℠ service?
If you are experiencing technical difficulties accessing the webcam service, please call 817-250-3120.
SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

The NICU journey can be both a physically and an emotionally taxing experience for a parent. The emotions of a NICU parent can include sorrow, guilt, anger and regret. Love and joy are there too but sometimes the stress and pain that a parent can experience during the NICU journey can overpower even the strongest and bravest parents. Basically, your baby’s medically challenging days will be your bad days and your baby’s healthy days are your good days.

Are there any support groups that are available for me?

Yes. The Tender Loving Care group meets regularly to discuss NICU experiences. There is a calendar of upcoming events in the family lounge or ask your bedside nurse.

Beads of Bravery

Beads of Bravery is a special program that honors the milestones achieved during a patient’s unique journey. The beads help parents tell their own stories of bravery. Upon admission to the NICU, all babies are given a string with beads that spell the baby’s first name. For every test or treatment, the newborn receives in the NICU, the baby will be eligible for a new bead on their string. The beads are distributed at the Together Let’s Cope group meetings in the family lounge. A calendar of group meeting dates is available in the family lounge.

Tips for Coping with a NICU Stay

The following tips can help you deal with ups and downs.

• Take care of yourself. Vent your frustrations to a friend, the social worker, chaplain or a counselor. Your health is important for you and your baby.
• Celebrate when you can. But also, give yourself permission to cry and feel overwhelmed. Try not to compare your baby’s situation with others. Your baby is a unique little person.
• Connect with other NICU parents. Meeting other parents in a similar situation can be very helpful.
• Keep a journal. Writing or typing about your NICU journey as it happens can be very therapeutic.
• Accept support. Even when they just don’t seem to understand how you feel.
• Take notes. It’s easy to get overwhelmed. Be prepared to ask questions.
• Take pictures of your baby. You can leave a disposable camera at the bedside for those special times.
• Take the opportunity to make memories. Have your baby’s footprints taken as soon as your baby is stable enough to tolerate it. Ask your nurse to help with this beautiful keepsake.

When to Seek Professional Counseling

You may benefit from seeing a professional counselor if:

• You think it may help you feel better.
• Your ability to cope with the situation is not improving and you feel stuck.
• You continue to find no joy in other parts of your life.
• You have trouble with your relationship with your partner or others close to you.

It is important to speak with a professional counselor if:

• You feel prolonged numbness or detachment.
• You continue to feel detached from your baby.
• You have trouble getting out of bed or starting your day.
• You feel unable to cope or manage your other responsibilities.
• You think about harming yourself or others.

Your doctor or the hospital social worker can help you figure out if counseling would be right for you as well as help you find a qualified counselor in your community.
HOSPITAL INFORMATION FOR YOUR NICU STAY

Internet access
The hospital offers free wireless to visitors and guests. To join, select the network THR-Guest. You will be prompted to agree to our terms of use in your internet browser.

Forgot something?
Texas Health Prescription Shop – Main building, ground floor
The Texas Health Prescription Shop sells many items including:
- Tooth paste
- Breast pump supplies
- Greeting cards
- Over-the-counter medications.

For more specific information or questions, call 214-345-2595.

The Shops at Main – Main building, first floor
The Shops at Main sells many items such as:
- Baby gifts
- Candy and sodas
- Greeting cards
- Gifts
- Pajamas
- Cell phone chargers.

For more specific information or questions, call 214-345-7960.

Spiritual support and chaplains
The three chapels of Texas Health Dallas welcome people of all faiths. The following chapels are located on campus:
- Main Chapel, Main building lobby
- Jackson Chapel, Jackson building lobby
- Margot Perot Chapel, Margot Perot Center lobby

A hospital chaplain can be reached from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. If your need is after hours, please call extension 8480 to have a chaplain paged for you. To reach a chaplain, call x7158 (214-345-7158) or outside normal business hours call x8480 (214-345-8480) to have a chaplain paged.
On-campus dining options
Texas Health Dallas has several on-campus dining options.

- **Café Presby** is located on the first floor of the Main building features a grill station featuring grilled chicken sandwiches, turkey/garden burgers, hamburgers, grilled cheeses, and many other items.
- **Subway®** is located inside Café Presby on the first floor of the Main building and serves fresh, made-to-order sandwiches using daily baked breads.
- **Au Bon Pain® Café and Bakery** is located in the lobby of the Main building and on the ground floor of the Jackson building and serves sandwiches and wraps, create-your-own salads, soups and fresh brewed specialty coffees and teas. Croissants, muffins, scones, bagels, artisan breads and cookies.
- **French Garden Café®** is located on the first floor of the Margot Perot building and offers an assortment of specialty French-inspired sandwiches, soups, pasta, breakfast sandwiches, quiches and desserts.
- **Cali Café** is located between the Professional buildings and offers an assortment of sandwiches, salads and breakfast sandwiches.

For specific operating hours, visit [TexasHealth.org/Dallas-Dining-Options](http://TexasHealth.org/Dallas-Dining-Options).

Lodging and dining suggestions
Texas Health Dallas has a hotel conveniently located on the 9th floor of the Main building. The hotel offers rooms to patients and families who need an affordable and convenient place to stay. Reservations are necessary.

The hotel offers the following amenities:
- business center
- private dining/lounging area
- laundry facilities
- kitchen area - complimentary coffee
- meeting space.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 214-345-4030 or visit [TexasHealth.org/GuestHouse](http://TexasHealth.org/GuestHouse).
TRANSITIONING TO SPECIAL CARE NURSERY

Texas Health Dallas has a special unit dedicated to caring for newborns that have graduated from the NICU but still require additional monitoring before going home. Much like the NICU, the Special Care Nursery team includes registered nurses, patient care technicians, physicians on the medical staff, respiratory and occupational therapists and lactation consultants. While in the Special Care Nursery, parents have an invaluable opportunity to take care of their baby with nursing staff nearby to assist and answer questions.

What are the differences between the NICU and the Special Care Nursery?

The Special Care Nursery will provide the same level of specialized care for your infant, but allows the family the opportunity to be more involved with their care in preparation for life at home. To enable parents to spend as much time with their babies as possible, the Special Care Nursery offers:

- Private rooms with bathrooms, where parents may stay overnight
- Room service dining
- Developmental pediatrician on the medical staff to monitor baby’s progress
- A play area for siblings.

Also, much of the care focuses on helping babies learn to feed. As babies mature, nurses and physicians on the medical staff will educate parents on using infant-driven feeding cues to help them know when their baby is hungry.

What is the process of moving to the Special Care Nursery?

The doctor will write orders that your baby is ready to be transitioned. You are welcomed to ask your nurse about an approximate time if you are interested in walking with the baby over to the Special Care Nursery.

Take a tour.

Prior to your baby’s transition to the Special Care Nursery, we encourage you to ask for a tour. The nurses can take you over to the unit to help you familiarize yourself with this new area.

Visitors in the Special Care Nursery

Visitors are welcome between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. when accompanied by a parent of the baby. A few additional notes:

- Siblings of the baby may visit but must be supervised in the room and family lounge at all times
- Children and visitors may not stay overnight
- Due to limited space, please limit guests to no more than four in the room at one time
- During cold and flu season, October through April, siblings under the age of 16 may have restricted visitation.
GETTING READY TO GO HOME

We know how exciting and scary it can be when you hear the words from your baby’s doctor and nurses that your baby will be ready to go home soon. Along the way, your baby’s doctors and nurses have been slowly preparing you through teaching and support so that you can become comfortable taking your baby home. Typically, your baby has to be able to eat well, maintain his/her weight, stay warm and breathe on his/her own.

Preparing to Go Home class
Prior to being released from the hospital, parents are encouraged to attend a Preparing to Go Home class to learn techniques in caring for and responding to their infant’s unique needs and get valuable resources for care at home. This class should be taken as soon as possible and the nursing staff will assist parents in signing up for a class.

Infant CPR
Ask your nurse for opportunities to familiarize yourself with CPR.

Learning to use equipment
Some babies require special equipment when they go home. Some common equipment that a baby may need after they leave the hospital includes an apnea monitor or home oxygen. The medical equipment company will provide the training prior to your baby leaving the hospital. The case manager will coordinate the teaching with you and the equipment company. Consider buying baby clothes that can fit comfortably with any equipment that your baby may be using.

Discharge paperwork and medical records
You should receive a copy of the baby’s discharge summary when your baby leaves the NICU. Make sure to keep the discharge summary in your diaper bag so that you have it for all doctor’s appointments. If you would like a copy of your baby’s medical record, contact the Health Information Services Department online at TexasHealth.org/MedicalRecords.

Baby’s space at home
Talk with your baby’s nurse about preparing a place for baby at home. Some typical baby shower gifts are not safe for a premature baby. Ask your nurse before you buy some of those typical items. Items to avoid include:

- Extra padding or inserts for your baby’s car seat
- Cushions that are sold to help keep your baby in a certain position in his/her bed
- Bumper pads for the baby’s crib at home
- Home monitors that promise to reduce the risk of SIDS
- A large number of the same kind of bottle or nipple. Your baby may not eat well from a particular bottle or nipple style at home.

Car seat test
Babies typically have a car seat test prior to going home. This test is done to make sure that your baby is breathing well while sitting in the car seat for a period of time. Should you have any questions about car seat safety or would like to have some help with the installation of the car seat, please speak with your baby’s nurse. Additionally, Texas Health Dallas offers Car Seat Safety Check Appointments which can assist you with making sure your car seat is correctly installed. You can make an appointment by calling 1-877-THR-Well.

Prescriptions
While in the hospital, the pharmacy can deliver medications for your infant to you prior to discharge. For more information, call 214-345-2595.
REQUESTING A BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Not only are you the proud parent of your new baby, but you are also faced with so much information that it can be very overwhelming. The last thing you might be thinking about is your baby’s birth certificate. Below are the office locations where birth certificates can be obtained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Office Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Allen</td>
<td>Collin County Clerk</td>
<td>972-548-4153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collin County Clerk</td>
<td>200 South McDonald St., Ste. 120</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>McKinney, TX 75069</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Alliance</td>
<td>Tarrant County Clerk</td>
<td>817-884-1550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarrant County Clerk</td>
<td>200 Taylor St., Ste. 301</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Worth, TX 76102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Arlington</td>
<td>City of Arlington Vital Records</td>
<td>817-459-6777</td>
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<td>City of Arlington Vital Records</td>
<td>201 E. Abram, Ste. 720</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 90231</td>
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<td>Arlington, TX 76004-3231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Cleburne</td>
<td>Johnson County Clerk</td>
<td>817-556-6191</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson County Clerk</td>
<td>2 North Main St.</td>
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<td>Cleburne, TX 76033</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Dallas</td>
<td>Dallas County Clerk</td>
<td>214-653-7131</td>
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<td>Dallas County Clerk</td>
<td>509 Main St., Records Building</td>
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<td>Dallas, TX 75202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Kaufman</td>
<td>Kaufman County Clerk</td>
<td>972-932-4331</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaufman County Clerk</td>
<td>100 West Mulberry St.</td>
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<td>Kaufman, TX 75142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Plano</td>
<td>Collin County Clerk</td>
<td>972-548-4153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collin County Clerk</td>
<td>200 South McDonald, Ste. 120</td>
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<tr>
<td>McKinney, TX 75069</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health HEB</td>
<td>Bureau of Vital Statistics for the City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bureau of Vital Statistics for</td>
<td>of Bedford</td>
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<tr>
<td>the City of Bedford</td>
<td>2000 Forest Ridge Dr.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bedford, TX 76021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Fort Worth</td>
<td>Tarrant County Clerk</td>
<td>817-884-1550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarrant County Clerk</td>
<td>200 Taylor St., Ste. 301</td>
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<td>Fort Worth, TX 76102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Southwest</td>
<td>Tarrant County Clerk</td>
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<td>Fort Worth</td>
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<td>born at Texas Health Kindergart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Born at Texas Health Stephenville</td>
<td>Erath County Clerk</td>
<td>254-965-1482</td>
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<td>Erath County Clerk</td>
<td>100 West Washington St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephenville, TX 76401</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Texas Department of Health Vital Statistics Division

On file at this location at least three months after birth for all births in the State of Texas.

1100 W. 49th St.
Austin, TX 78756
512-458-7111

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

Parents may request a Social Security number for their newborn at the time of birth. The Social Security Administration will assign your newborn a number and mail the card directly to you. For additional information regarding Social Security cards, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call 1-800-772-1213.
# HELPFUL RESOURCES

Here are some websites that can help you during your NICU stay.

## NICU Experience Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website/Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March of Dimes</td>
<td>The mission of the March of Dimes is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. The website has a wealth of information on a variety of topics including prenatal care and information about the NICU. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.marchofdimes.com/nicu">www.marchofdimes.com/nicu</a> or <a href="http://www.nacersano.org">www.nacersano.org</a> (Spanish site).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>This is a March of Dimes online community especially for NICU families. Participate in online discussions, start a blog, or just make friends. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.shareyourstory.org">www.shareyourstory.org</a> or <a href="http://www.compartasuhistoria.org">www.compartasuhistoria.org</a> (Spanish site).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping Others Informed</td>
<td>Staying in touch with loved ones and friends while also managing a healthcare challenge can be difficult. But staying connected is a crucial component to getting and staying well – for both patients and caregivers. March of Dimes understands these obstacles, and are prepared to help. This is a free online service that helps family and friends stay in touch and informed while your baby is in the hospital. The program provides secure personalized web pages designed to keep family and friends connected to a patient. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.carepages.com/marchofdimes">www.carepages.com/marchofdimes</a></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

## Social Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website/Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-1-1 Texas</td>
<td>The 2-1-1 helpline in North Texas maintains a list of community services providing assistance with health care, employment, education, housing, counseling, transportation needs, and much more. Assistance is available 24 hours a day and has multilingual staff. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.211northtexas.org">www.211northtexas.org</a> or call <strong>2-1-1</strong> (or toll free <strong>1-877-541-7905</strong>) or TTY <strong>1-877-833-4211</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI/Medicaid Program</td>
<td>Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides financial assistance for NICU medical expenses. Eligibility for this assistance program is determined by a baby's birth weight rather than by income while the baby in the hospital. You must apply for this program shortly after your baby is born, so be sure to ask your social worker or case manager for assistance with your application. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.ssa.gov">www.ssa.gov</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transportation Program</td>
<td>Medicaid recipients can use this program to request transportation getting to the doctor or hospital in another city (including the hospital to visit your baby). It can help pay for travel and meals in some cases if you must stay away from home overnight or longer for medical reasons. If you have any questions about this program you can ask your social worker. <strong>DFW area residents call 1-855-687-3255 or MTP at 1-877-MED-TRIP (1-877-633-8747)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIC (Women, Infants and Children)</td>
<td>WIC provides nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care for low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5. Even if you have been denied Medicaid due to financial reasons, you might still qualify for WIC. WIC is also able to loan a breast pump if you are returning to work or school. If you need a breast pump, please ask for one of the WIC offices that serves your community. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd">www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd</a> or call <strong>1-800-942-3678</strong></td>
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