

Contact Telephone Numbers:

Neonatal Unit, Lister Hospital 01438 284125

Children's Emergency Department 01438 284606

Further Information

For more information see the Bliss Baby Charity website at:

www.bliss.org.uk

Bliss helpline telephone number: 0808 801 0322

Or e-mail: hello@bliss.org.uk

References

Adapted from NICU Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and PEGS Newborn Pain Project Australia (2007)

Date of publication: March 2010

Author: Neonatal

Reference: Pain relief baby Version: 02 (Mar 2018)

Review Date: March 2021

© East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

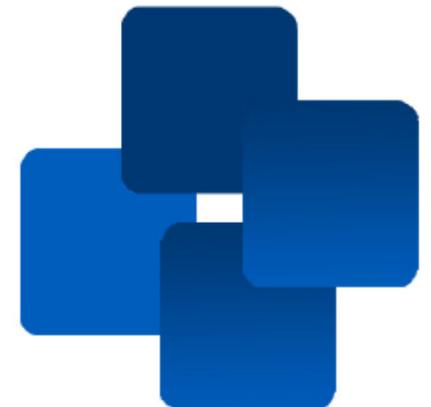
www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk

You can request this information in a different format or another language.

Information for Parents

Pain Relief in Babies

Neonatal Unit



How we relieve pain and discomfort for babies

Sucrose

Sucrose is a sugar solution, a tiny amount of which is placed on the front of the tongue immediately prior to a procedure. This helps to soothe the baby. The effects of sucrose are enhanced by sucking.

Paracetamol

Paracetamol is used for mild pain or fever. It can be given orally as liquid paracetamol or via the rectum in suppository form, which is useful if your baby is not yet feeding.

Morphine

Morphine is usually only prescribed when babies are ventilated and requiring intensive care or following surgery. The dose is gradually reduced over a period of time and then stopped.

How parents can support their baby during painful procedures

As well as using drugs to relieve pain and discomfort, there are a number of other ways to help your baby cope with the experience of pain and discomfort. The nurse caring for your baby will advise you on when these alternative methods should be used.

- Keeping the baby in a comfortable position with their body and legs tucked and with their hands under their chin during painful procedures, can reduce distress as it gives them a sense of enclosure.
- Holding your baby skin to skin.
- Talking to your baby may act as a distraction.
- If your baby is in the special care nursery, you can comfort your baby by holding or supporting them during procedures.

- If you are breastfeeding, it can be helpful to give your baby a breastfeed for a couple of minutes before the procedure. If you are not breastfeeding, please ask the nurse or doctor to provide some sucrose for your baby.
- Swaddling - wrapping your baby in a sheet or light blanket, during and after a painful procedure, will help them contain their response to pain, such as crying and agitation.

Do all babies respond to the same soothing effects?

Babies are individuals and react in different ways to attempts at soothing. For example, some babies will not be soothed by rocking but will be by the sound of a voice or music.

You need to watch how your own baby responds to comfort measures. Try something else if what you are doing does not seem to be helpful. If you have any concerns at all, please speak to the nurse looking after your baby.

Pain and your baby

Some experiences and procedures in the Neonatal Unit have the potential to cause some discomfort to your baby.

The pain your baby may experience is expressed in their behaviour, facial expressions and other changes, such as their heart beating faster or changes in their oxygen saturation, blood pressure or colour.

It is important to remember that babies may show these same behaviours when they are upset or agitated for other reasons, for example, having their nappy changed or because they are hungry. If you have any questions or concerns at all, please speak to the nurse looking after your baby.