

Footprints to Home

When Your Infant Can Go Home From the NICU



GENERAL MAIN GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Important Note: *These are general main goals and expectations for most infants in the NICU. However, discharge requirements may vary among babies and families depending on personal circumstances. Any additional requirements will be personally discussed with families by the medical team. See the **Additional Discharge Requirements** section for more details.*

I Am Gaining Weight

Your baby is consistently gaining weight and is growing well overall. There is no specific weight requirement for going home.

I Am Breathing Without Any Help

Your baby does not need any breathing support like NIPPV or CPAP, and is comfortable breathing room air. Your baby also does not have any breathing problems (i.e., apnea) that require stimulation.

I Am in a Bassinet/Crib

Your baby can stay warm while being in a bassinet/crib and does not need to be in an incubator or bed warmer.

I Have My Home Nipple and Bottle

Your baby has a bottle with an appropriate nipple flow with which they can safely eat. While parents may choose any bottle they prefer, sometimes a different bottle may be recommended based on the baby's needs. Therefore, your baby should practice feeding with the home bottle several times to determine if it is a good match.

I Can Breastfeed or Nipple All My Feedings

Your baby is able to breastfeed without any issues and/or eat all their feeds SAFELY with their home bottle. Your baby will not need a nasogastric tube for any feeds. Parents and/or caregivers will need to practice feeding baby several times until they feel comfortable and confident.

My Parents Can Mix My Milk

Most babies will go home with a custom milk recipe based on their nutritional needs. Parents will be taught how to mix their baby's specific milk recipe and will need hands-on practice until they feel comfortable.

My Parents Know How to Give Me My Meds

Parents will be educated on and taught how to give any home medications that their baby will be discharged with. Parents will need to practice giving those medications until they feel comfortable and confident doing so.

My Parents Picked up My Medications

Parents will pick up any home medications for baby from the Outpatient Pharmacy closer to the day of discharge. Parents will become familiar with the medication packaging and understand why baby will need it.

I Had My Hearing Test

A hearing test is required for all babies before they can go home. This may be done when your baby is in a bassinet/crib and does not have an IV. Additional testing may be required if your baby does not pass the standard hearing test.

I Have a Bed For Safe Sleeping

Your baby has a designated crib or bed that will ensure a safe sleep environment. A safe sleep environment includes having your baby always sleep on their back, no soft objects or loose bedding in the crib/bed and no co-sleeping with parents.

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GENERAL MAIN GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS (CONTINUED)

I Have a Car Seat That I Fit In

Your baby should have a car seat that is safe and properly fits. Parents are responsible for knowing how to assemble the car seat, adjusting the parts and installing the car seat base. Another car seat may be recommended if the fit is unsafe, so please be sure to bring in the car seat well before the anticipated discharge date.

I Passed My Car Seat Tolerance Test

If your baby meets the criteria due to their medical history or current condition, they will be tested to see if they can safely breathe in their car seat. This is done by simply placing your baby in their car seat and monitoring their vitals for one hour. If they fail, another test or car seat may be recommended.

My Parents Took an Infant CPR Class

Depending on your baby's medical history, an infant CPR class offered at the hospital may be required prior to discharge. If the class is required, your NICU social worker will contact you to arrange a date and time prior to discharge. You may still take the class if it is optional, but

you will need to self-register and pay the class fee. Ask for a CPR flyer from your medical team for more information.

My Immunizations Are Up-To-Date

Your baby has received all the appropriate immunizations, including, but not limited to, Hepatitis B and Synagis. A record of immunizations will be provided upon discharge.

My Parents Picked a Pediatrician

You will need to contact your baby's pediatrician's office to inform them of his/her birth and confirm that they will accept your baby as their new patient. If you do not have a pediatrician, you may contact your insurance provider for a list of pediatricians or ask your NICU social worker for help. Once you have confirmed your baby's pediatrician, please inform your baby's medical team.

My First Pediatrician Appointment Is Scheduled

Once discharge is confirmed, you will need to schedule a follow-up appointment with your baby's pediatrician, usually for the day after discharge from the NICU. Please inform the NICU medical team of your appointment day and time.

ADDITIONAL DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS



NOTE: *The following are some additional discharge requirements that families may need to meet prior to discharge. Please ask your nurse or medical team for more information.*

WIC Enrollment

Eligible families will need to enroll their baby for WIC services prior to baby's discharge. WIC asks that you wait a few days prior to your baby's discharge to enroll him/ her. The WIC office, which is located on the third floor of the Diamond Head Tower, will transfer your files to your home office.

Circumcision and Care

If you would like your baby to be circumcised, this will be done in your baby's room by the physician closer to discharge. Parents will be taught how to care for the circumcision site and will need to practice until they feel comfortable and confident. In some cases, we may be unable to perform a circumcision prior to discharge. If this happens, your baby will be referred to a urologist for an outpatient procedure.

ROP Exams and Letters

Babies who meet the criteria will get eye exams to check for Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) and to make sure their eyes are developing properly. Prior to discharge, the ROP nurse coordinator will meet with you to discuss follow-up eye exams after discharge from the NICU and will have you sign a letter.

Going Home on Oxygen

If your baby is going home needing oxygen, your medical team will arrange for additional teaching on the necessary home equipment and medical supplies.

Going Home With NGT Feeds

If your baby is going home still needing nasogastric tube (NGT) feedings, parents and/or caregivers will receive thorough training on how to insert the NGT, how to check for correct placement, and how to give feeds through the NGT. Your medical team will arrange for additional teaching on the necessary home equipment and medical supplies prior to discharge.

Going Home With GT Feeds

If your baby is going home with gastric tube (GT) feeds, parents and/or caregivers will receive thorough teaching on how to care for the GT site, how to give feeds through it, and what to do in the case of accidental dislodgement. Parents will work closely with the bedside nurses and WOC nurses to become comfortable and independent with GT care. Additional teaching on home equipment and supplies will be provided prior to discharge.