



Barnsley Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

My Baby is on IV Antibiotics

Information for parents
about the administration of
Intravenous (IV) Antibiotics
to newborn babies on the
Postnatal ward



Patient Information Leaflet



This information leaflet will give you a brief overview of why babies sometimes need antibiotics whilst on the postnatal ward and what will happen over the coming days. If you require any assistance please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff who can help you.

“Why is my baby on antibiotics”?

Babies often require antibiotics due to a suspected infection. This can be for many reasons such as possible infection with mum or issues in pregnancy/labour. This may also be required if your midwife is concerned that your baby appears unwell.

“How will the antibiotics be given”?

Antibiotics are most effective if they are given directly into the baby's blood stream. This is done by using a small plastic tube called a cannula, usually inserted into your baby's hand or foot.

“Will this procedure hurt”?

Having a cannula sited can be unpleasant for babies, but once it is in place, it does not normally cause any distress. Sometimes giving your baby some colostrum can calm your baby during this process. Your midwife will monitor the cannula to make sure it is not causing your baby pain or discomfort. The cannula is then protected by a dressing.

“What tests are done”?

Firstly, the doctor will obtain some blood samples from the cannula.

These are:

Blood cultures - these are grown in a laboratory to see if any bugs grow from it; this usually takes 36 hours to process.

CRP - this can show any possible signs of infection.

FBC - this also shows any signs of possible infection.

After 24 hours of antibiotics, the doctor will repeat the CRP to check this level has not risen. If this has risen other tests may be arranged such as:

Chest X-ray- a picture of taken of your baby's chest to detect any possible infection.

Lumbar puncture- taking a sample of fluid from your baby's back to test for infection, this result also can take up to 36 hours.

“What antibiotics will you give”?

At Barnsley Hospital babies are given two types of antibiotics which work well together to fight the most common types of bacteria in newborn babies:

- 1) Benzylpenicillin: usually given twice a day.
- 2) Gentamicin: usually given every 36 hours.

“Will I need to be separated from my baby”?

If your baby is well enough, they will remain with you on the postnatal ward. The antibiotics are given by the midwife looking after you and usually only takes a few minutes. The midwife will be keeping a close eye on your baby, monitoring their temperature, heart rate and breathing.

“Can I still breastfeed”?

Breastfeeding is actively promoted and as long as your baby is well enough, you can continue to breastfeed. If your baby needs to be monitored more closely on the Neonatal Unit (NNU) you will be supported to continue to breastfeed.

“How long will I need to stay in Hospital”?

If all the tests that are taken come back normal, your baby is well and there is no infection detected we can consider stopping the antibiotics after 36 hours. If your baby however appears unwell, or the tests show any signs of infection, antibiotic treatment may continue for 5-7 days (or sometimes longer). Midwives and Doctors will continue to keep you updated and supported whilst on the postnatal ward.

If you have any further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Going home

Most babies do not require any follow up and you should continue to see your Midwife/ Health Visitor and GP as normal but please be aware of signs of an unwell baby.

- Not waking for feeds or difficult to rise.
- Floppy or stiff.
- Poor feeding, vomiting or their tummy looking bloated.
- Changes in skin colour.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Altered behaviour or responsiveness.
- Excessive crying.
- A rash that does not disappear when pressed.
- Abnormal temperature (below 36°C or above 38°C).
- Rapid breathing or pauses in breathing (apnoea).

If you are concerned please seek medical advice (from your GP, NHS 111 or your nearest Accident & Emergency Department) and make them aware that your baby has been on antibiotics.



If you need this information in an alternative format, please contact the **Patient Advice and Complaints Team** on **01226 432330**.

Если Вы хотели бы эту информацию на другом языке или другом формате, типа большой печати, пожалуйста звоните 01226 432330

Jeśli potrzebujesz te informacje w innym języku czy w innej postaci, na przykład dużym drukiem, proszę dzwonić na numer 01226 432330

如果您想索取這些資料的中文譯本或以其他形式編制的版本（如大字體），請 致電01226 432330

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