

# Care of Your Baby with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Education Plan

## What I need to learn about caring for my baby with NAS

By the time I leave the hospital, I will be able to tell the staff:

1. What signs of withdrawal my baby may show
2. How to calm my baby
3. What to do if my baby's symptoms are getting worse
4. When to play with my baby
5. How to take care of myself while caring for my baby
6. How to keep my baby safe when they have long fussy times
7. About safe sleep practices

## The staff will use three questions to teach me about care of my baby with NAS:

1. What is the main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words, or ask me to show what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about NAS and how to care for my baby.

## What is the problem?

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) is the name for the set of symptoms that might be seen in a baby that is withdrawing from opioids used by his or her mother during pregnancy. Babies with NAS need special care in the hospital and at home.

## What do I need to know?

- I need to know what signs of withdrawal my baby may show.
  - My baby may:
    - Be fussy or cry a lot.
    - Be sensitive to noise and light.
    - Have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.
    - Have tight or stiff muscles.
    - Have jittery movements.
    - Move his or her arms and legs a lot.
    - Arch his or her back when upset.

- Have frequent spit-ups.
  - Have loose poop or diarrhea.
  - Want to suck frequently, and may not be hungry.
  - Have a warmer temperature than normal.
- I need to know how to calm my baby.
  - I can calm my baby by:
    - Holding my baby.
    - Holding my baby skin to skin.
    - Swaddling my baby.
    - Offering my baby a pacifier.
    - Feeding my baby small amounts often.
    - Keeping the lights in my baby's room dim.
    - Keeping the noise in my baby's room low.
    - Playing soft music.
    - Not waking my baby up when he or she is sleeping.
    - Rocking my baby.
    - Putting my baby in a swing when awake where I can keep a close eye on him or her.
- I need to know what to do if my baby's symptoms are getting worse.
  - If my baby's symptoms are getting worse, I will call my baby's doctor right away.
  - I will call 911 if my baby:
    - Is having trouble breathing
    - Has pale or blueish coloring of the skin or lips
    - Is having seizures.
- I need to know when to play with my baby.
  - When my baby is awake and calm and showing less signs of withdrawal (level **green**-See *My Baby's Behavior* book), I can slowly start to expose them to more light and sound.
  - If my baby becomes fussier or begins to show more signs of withdrawal, I will use calming strategies to help comfort them. This may include turning down lights and sounds.
- I need to know how to take care of myself
  - It is important to care for myself so I can care for my baby the best I can.
  - This will be different for every person. Some suggestions may be:
    - Have a friend or family member help you with care of the baby.
    - If your baby is crying a lot and you get frustrated, put the baby in his or her bed and take a break.
    - Eat well and drink lots of water.
    - Get rest when baby is sleeping.
    - Contact your doctor if you are feeling sad or "blue".

- Find some quiet time for yourself every day.
  - Identify what is stressful and try to find ways to relax.
  - Simplify things and set a routine. Limit activities to only the things you really need to do.
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- I need to know how to keep my baby with NAS safe when they have long fussy times.
    - If I get frustrated because my baby is crying a lot, I will put my baby in his or her bed and take a break.
  
  - I need to know safe sleep practices. I have shown the staff that I know these practices.
    - See - A Parents' Guide to Safe Sleep

### **Why is this important?**

I want my baby to grow and to be healthy and happy. I will be able to calm my baby as needed and keep him or her safe. I will be able to know when signs are getting better or worse. I will know when to call the doctor.

As part of my baby's care and to help me understand how to care for my infant dealing with NAS, I have received this education plan and:

- *My Baby's Behavior Book*
- A Parents' Guide to Safe Sleep

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## Teaching Tools (Items given to patient)

- *My Baby's Behavior* book
- [A Parents' Guide to Safe Sleep](#)

## References:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2008). *A parents' guide to safe sleep*. Retrieved from

[https://inside.bronsonhg.org/web\\_content/95/SIDSparentsafesleep.pdf](https://inside.bronsonhg.org/web_content/95/SIDSparentsafesleep.pdf)

Always close the teaching session with the question, “What questions do you have for me?”

Approved by:

Authored by: Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

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