



Coming to GOSH soon after birth

This information sheet has been written to explain about coming to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) soon after your baby's birth and what support you can expect when you stay here.

Whether the transfer was planned or not, you are bound to feel overwhelmed by all that you are feeling. We hope that this information sheet gives you some useful tips and suggestions.

Coming to GOSH

Some mums have to stay in their local hospital for a day or two so that they can recover from the birth while their baby is staying at GOSH.

When you are able to come to GOSH, we know that you will have a lot to take in and that it might take a while to understand how your baby is doing. We will explain to you exactly what has been happening since your baby was transferred to us. If you want us to repeat anything, please ask us. It is important that you understand your baby's condition.

If you have had a caesarian section, you are welcome to visit your baby as often as you can. We have adult wheelchairs if you are unable to walk up to the ward. However, you will need to be officially discharged from the hospital where you gave birth before you can stay overnight at GOSH. You will probably feel uncomfortable for a while afterwards so we advise that someone stays with you both while you are visiting and when you are staying with us.

Staying at GOSH

If your baby is in intensive care, parent accommodation is available for two of you. The parents' unit is adjacent to the hospital. If your baby has been transferred to another one of our wards, we can offer parent accommodation to one of you. We can also give you details of hotels in the local area.

Breastfeeding

We encourage all our new mums to try to breastfeed, and our neonatal nurse advisor is here to help you. If your baby is not able to feed directly from your breast at the moment, there are breast pumps and expressing rooms available in the hospital. We also provide sterile bottles and attachments for the breast pumps to make it easy and safe for you to express. We will teach you how to use them so your baby can still have breast milk even if breastfeeding is not an option just yet. Ask a member of staff to help you. We can also provide information on breast feeding and expressing milk. Breastfeeding vouchers are provided for you to use in the GOSH Lagoon restaurant and coffee shop.



Visits from a midwife

You will receive your postnatal care from the community midwives from University College London Hospital (UCLH). If you would like to see one of our community midwives, please fill in the Midwifery Clinic form. This form needs to be taken to the midwifery clinic. We have a postnatal clinic at GOSH, three afternoons a week, for mothers who are less than 10 days after delivery. The clinic is held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons between 2pm and

3.30pm in the Midwifery Room on Level 4 of Weston House. There will be no clinic on Bank Holidays.

You will be able to see the midwife on your own, and during your first visit, we will see how you are doing and plan your following visits to the clinic. If you and your baby leave GOSH before your next visit to the clinic, please inform your local midwife so that they can visit you at home.





In an emergency

At the first postnatal clinic appointment, all new mothers will be advised of the signs and symptoms of potentially life-threatening conditions. If any of these signs and symptoms occur, please contact the community midwives at UCLH or a member of staff immediately.

Signs and symptoms	Potential condition
Sudden and profuse blood loss or persistent increased blood loss	→ Postpartum haemorrhage
Fever, shivering, abdominal pain and/or offensive vaginal discharge	→ Infection
Headaches and visual disturbances and/or nausea and vomiting within 72 hours of birth	→ Pre-eclampsia or eclampsia
Pain, redness or swelling in one calf and/or shortness of breath and/or chest pain	→ Thromboembolism (blood clot)

If it is not an emergency, you can contact the UCLH community midwives on 020 3477 6330.

Alternatively, you can arrange to see the local family doctor (GP) at the Holborn Medical Centre on Lambs Conduit Street. You will need to register in person as a 'temporary resident' and the Medical Centre staff will call you back. If you have any questions, please call the Holborn Medical Centre on 020 3077 0044.

Supplies

If you need any special toiletries, it might be easier to see if someone could bring some in to you. We stock some items in our shop, and there are local chemists in the area, but if you prefer a specific brand, it could be easier to bring them from home.

Keeping in touch

Your family and friends are bound to want to know how you and your baby are doing but it can seem overwhelming to have to tell the same thing to lots of people over and over again. Some of our parents have found that nominating one person to pass on information helps, as they only have to call that one person.

If you do want to have a chat, there are card phones in various places around the hospital, or you could use your mobile phone in designated safe areas.

Time out

While we want you to be as involved in looking after your baby as you feel able, we want you to have some time out too. Please do not feel you have to spend every minute with your baby. It is important that you have some time out too. It can help to have a walk around too.



Keeping your strength up

We know that you might not feel like eating much, but you need to keep yourself well. Please make sure you eat regularly. Remember that most wards have a kitchen so you can make yourself tea and coffee. There are places in the hospital to eat, such as the Lagoon restaurant and coffee shop. If you feel up to going out to eat, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (Pals) Office can give you some suggestions.

Finally

Remember, although we are looking after your baby, we also want to make sure you are alright too. We have a neonatal nurse advisor who has lots of experience of looking after new mums and their babies. Ask your nurse to contact her if you would like a chat. If you think things are getting too much, there are people throughout the hospital who are there to listen and help, like your ward nurses, the social workers, family liaison nurses, chaplains and Pals. We are all here to help.

Notes

Compiled by the Neonatal Nurse Advisor
in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group

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