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# Babies Receiving Antibiotics

## Neonatal Intensive Care Unit



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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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# Babies Receiving Antibiotics

**Dear Parents,**

**Our warmest congratulations on the birth of your baby.**

After birth, some babies are at risk of infection and need treatment in hospital. This leaflet explains in simple terms what to expect in this case. We usually treat babies in the Transitional Care Unit / Joan Booker ward. You will both be transferred to here when you are well enough to leave labour ward.

If you want to know more about anything in this leaflet, please ask us anytime.

## **What is “early-onset neonatal bacterial infection”?**

Getting a bacterial infection in the first 72 hours after birth can be dangerous for newborns. Group B streptococcus (GBS) is the most common cause, but there are others too.

Some babies have a higher than usual risk of infection, if:

- The mother had a previous baby with GBS, or had a GBS infection (including a urine infection) during this pregnancy
- The baby was born before 37 weeks, and the mothers waters broke more than 18 hours before the birth
- The mother has a suspected infection.

## What tests will my baby have?

If we suspect that your baby has an infection, we will start giving your baby antibiotics. These are given through an intravenous cannula, straight into the bloodstream so they can start working quickly.

During the first few days we use blood tests and sometimes other tests to monitor the infection and also the treatment.

Depending on the results, and how your baby's infection is responding to treatment, we may talk to you about doing further investigations.

We will regularly assess your baby during antibiotic treatment. If baby's condition is not improving, or the laboratory tests and microbiology experts advise us, we may add or change the antibiotics.

## After the first 36 - 48 hours

We may decide to stop antibiotic treatment after 36 - 48 hours. This will depend on whether the blood tests are clear, your baby seems well, and there are no symptoms or signs of infection.

If the tests show a bacterial infection, we usually keep the antibiotic treatment going for 5 – 10 days. However, if your baby has not fully recovered, and the tests continue to show an infection, we will continue giving treatment for longer.

## Going home

After completing antibiotic treatment in hospital, your baby should be completely well and able to come home with you. Very rarely, infections may come back, or your baby might develop a new problem. If you observe that your baby

- is listless or unusually floppy
- has problems taking feeds
- has an abnormal temperature, rapid breathing and / or changes in skin colour
- is crying inconsolably

**You should seek prompt medical help from your midwife, NHS 111, your GP, or an Accident & Emergency department.**