



BABY'S FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT

Many babies who have been a patient at the Women's will need a follow-up appointment – usually about six weeks after they go home.

Why does my baby need a follow-up?

Babies who need a follow-up appointment are usually those who have:

- » been born premature
- » been born smaller than we expect (“growth restricted”)
- » had problems after birth and needed to see a doctor from the neonatal team
- » had ultrasound scans before or after birth that need to be reviewed.

When is the follow-up appointment?

We will usually see your baby about six weeks after they go home. We will mail an appointment to your home address.

If you do not receive an appointment time within six weeks, please contact our clinic coordinator on (03) 8345 2240 or newborn.followup@thewomens.org.au

We know that families with young babies can be very busy. You may get a phone call or SMS a few days before the appointment as a reminder.

Who will we see at the clinic?

Our clinics are staffed by specialists and fellows (doctors who are completing their training as specialists).

If your baby needs to be seen more than once, they will come back to see the same specialist (or the fellow working with that specialist).

How much will it cost?

If you are an Australian citizen or resident, the visit will be free. The clinic is funded through Medicare so you will need to bring your baby's Medicare card with you.

If you do not have a Medicare card by the time you are seen, you will need to pay a small amount but you can get this reimbursed through Medicare.

If you are not eligible for Medicare (for example, you are an overseas visitor) you will have to pay for the care your baby receives.

Do I need a referral from my family doctor (GP)?

If we have arranged the visit on the day your baby was going home, you will not need a referral. However, if we need to see your baby several times, we may ask you to see your family doctor when our referral expires.

What if I can't keep my baby's appointment?

If you cannot come, please tell us so we can arrange for someone else to be seen instead.

We will rebook an appointment as soon as possible but it may be difficult for us to see you quickly.

What do I need to bring?

You will need to bring:

- » your baby's Medicare card (if you have it)
- » your baby's green book (My Health, Learning and Development record)
- » a referral from your family doctor (if we have asked you to provide a new one).

How long will my baby need to be followed up for?

This depends on why we are seeing your baby.

Most babies who were not born premature or were only a bit premature will be seen only once or twice in the first few months after going home.

Babies who were more premature or smaller will be followed-up for longer.

Why do some babies need to have regular appointments until they are two years old?

As the team who looked after your baby, it is very important for us and you to know how your baby is doing as a toddler.

If your baby weighed less than 1000g or was born at less than 28 weeks, we will want to have regular follow-up visits with them until they are around two years old.

Even if your baby is going home from another hospital and has their paediatric follow-up organised somewhere else, we would still like to see them at two years of age (adjusted for their prematurity).

We can identify if there are areas where your child may benefit from some extra help, we can give advice about what you can do, and we can refer to appropriate services in your local area if these are needed.

Closer to the time, we will contact you with a date and time for the assessment.

What does the two-year assessment involve?

The two-year assessment includes a detailed developmental and medical assessment. It may take two to three hours. You will have plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

This assessment will include:

- » A medical assessment with a doctor. This will take half an hour.
- » A physiotherapist will do a number of activities to check your baby's development, including cognitive (or thinking) skills, motor (movement) skills and language development. This may take up to two hours.
- » Afterwards we will discuss the results with you. We will also send a written summary in the post and arrange referrals to other services if needed.

Some babies enrolled in research studies will have a two-year assessment with a research team. The research team will contact you with details if this applies to you.

What do we do with the results of the two-year assessment?

Your child's details remain anonymous and your privacy is respected at all times. We will not provide any identifiable information to anyone without your consent.

We provide anonymous information from your child's assessment to the Australian and New Zealand Neonatal Network, so that we can see how babies cared for at the Women's are getting along compared to babies looked after in other hospitals in Australia and New Zealand.

Contact details

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