



MOVING YOUR BABY TO THE SPECIAL CARE NURSERY

The Special Care Nursery is a new and different environment for your baby and it may take them a day or two to settle in. Their stage of development has progressed but they can still be sensitive to changes in their environment.

TYPICAL SENSORY DEVELOPMENT	WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP
<p>Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby's ability to cope with bright light is still limited As your baby gets older, they may begin to look briefly at your face Preterm babies often find visual stimulation quite overwhelming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect baby's eyes from bright light As your baby gets closer to full term age, gradually introduce more light Allow your baby to look at you without too much other stimulation (e.g. noise, toys) Limit the use of mobiles or pictures until your baby is coping with looking at faces. Make sure mobiles are removed at sleep times
<p>Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby knows your voice and your presence will continue to soothe them Your baby may blink or startle in response to sudden noise Now they are in an open cot, noises may seem louder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speak softly to your baby and avoid loud conversations when you are near them Gently support baby with your hands if they startle At sleep time keep your baby's environment quiet
<p>Communication/Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby will have different ways of letting you know what they like and don't like You may notice your baby has some awake periods as they get older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to watch out for signs that your baby needs a break Talk to your baby as you care for them. Use a quiet, calm voice with varied expressions. This helps them learn about communication
<p>Feeding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby will usually start sucking when their mouth is touched with your finger, a dummy or a nipple Coordination of sucking, swallowing and breathing is developing and it may be possible to start oral feeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold baby in your arms during tube feeding when possible – this is good for bonding Provide an opportunity for your baby to suck on a dummy during tube feeding. Your baby may also like the taste of milk on their dummy For more information please see the fact sheet <i>Helping your baby to breastfeed in NICU</i>
<p>Movement and positioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby will move when they are having their nappy changed or when they are unwrapped. They may like stretching, kicking or moving their arms around Your baby may try to bring their hand to their mouth or both hands together Sometimes your baby's movements might be a bit jerky or they may startle Some babies may start to show a preference for turning their head and resting it to one side. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swaddling is a good way to settle your baby. It keeps your baby tucked up and helps to bring their hands near their face or together in the middle. A nest may still be useful for positioning Until your baby can cope with being on their back for longer periods, they will need to lay on their tummy or side Handling and care should be gentle and slow Encourage your baby to try different positions for their head such as turned to either side or resting in the middle Holding and cuddling your baby provides different positions for them to experience

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