

Sucrose for pain relief in newborn babies

The Royal Women's Hospital Fact Sheet / www.thewomens.org.au



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What is sucrose?

Sucrose is sugar. In this case though, we are referring to a sucrose solution which is specially made up for newborn babies.

Why do you use sucrose?

Giving newborn babies sucrose by mouth, together with sucking and being held or contained, has been found to be a safe way to reduce or minimise discomfort from brief painful events such as a heel prick. The effect lasts only a few minutes.

If you have given permission for your baby to have a dummy he or she will be given it at the same time as the sucrose solution.

How do I know the solution is safe?

The sucrose solution is prepared by the hospital pharmacy to be used only in a hospital. Small doses of sucrose are placed in your baby's mouth using a syringe, starting two minutes before the procedure. Up to four small doses of sucrose can be given for each painful event and there is a maximum amount your baby can receive in any 24 hours, dependent on your baby's weight.

There is no evidence that sucrose given to babies for pain reduction in hospital affects future teeth development or conditions babies to sweeteners.

For more information

If you would like any other information about sucrose, please ask one of the nurses or doctors.

The Royal Women's Hospital

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The Women's is a smoke free hospital. For more information and support visit www.quit.org.au

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