

Supporting your baby in hospital

A hospital ward can be an unfamiliar and stressful environment for a baby. There are a number of ways you can help support their mental health, and stay connected, while you're here. Remember, you know your baby best, so always speak to your baby's care team if you have any worries or concerns.

Messages from your bub

I can tell when my loved ones are feeling stressed so I need you to look after yourself so you can help calm me.

Your familiar face and voice can help soothe me, even during procedures.

You know me best and can help my care team understand what I'm trying to say with my actions and behaviour.

I love it when you talk and sing to me. Your voice can help me to feel calmer.

I love cuddles even when I'm in bed. Your smell, touch and voice can comfort me when I am in pain or scared.

A game of peek-a-boo can be a fun way for us to connect.

A gentle massage can help me relax if I'm feeling up to it.

Share information about me on the whiteboard for times when you can't be there.



Reading your baby's cues

All babies have behaviours that tell you what they need. Sick and premature babies do this too, although it might be harder for parents or carers to interpret. It's important to remember, every baby has their own signs and cues to communicate, and no two babies are the same.



I might need a break

- Looking away after some time making eye contact
- Turning head away from the person talking
- Squirming after being settled for a period



Signs I might be struggling

- Not being interested in looking, sounds or touch
- Resisting cuddles or comfort
- Not wanting to play or interact
- Seeming scared, worried or upset



I might be feeling tired

- Staring at nothing
- Losing interest in things happening around them
- Jerky movements
- Yawning
- Fussing and grizzling

We know that it can also be a challenging time for parents and carers. Our supportive team are always available to help you and your baby while staying with us.

For more tips on supporting your baby while in hospital, including helpful resources for parents and carers, scan the QR codes below.



More information
for parents



What my baby is
trying to tell me



I am content and ready to interact

- Regular heart rate (if baby has a monitor) or breathing
- Looking at you
- Sucking or hand near mouth or face
- Smooth movements



I might be stressed and need support

- Squirming
- Frantic arm and leg movements
- Looking away from parents, carers or care team
- Crying or arching their back



Let us know if you would like free Interpreter Services.



Contact the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support
3068 5950