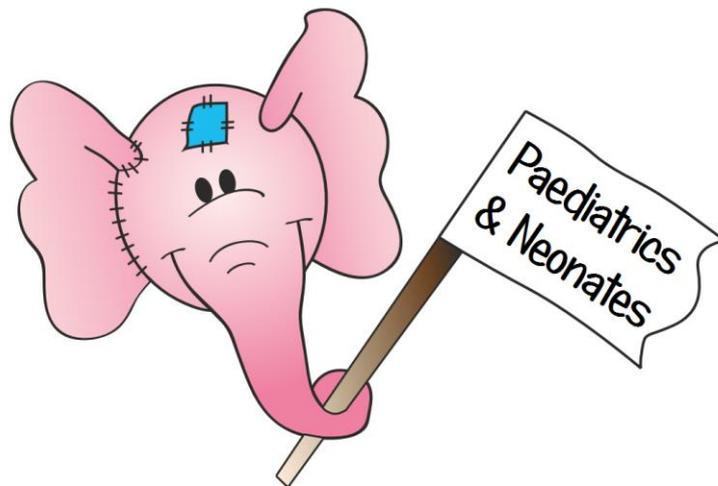


# Gram-negative infections

**Neonatal Unit**

**Parent/Carer Information Leaflet**



## **Introduction**

This leaflet is for parents/carers of babies in the Neonatal Unit. It gives information about infections caused by gram-negative organisms and the treatment given for these.

## **What are gram-negative organisms?**

They are a group of bacteria (germs) which can be difficult to treat. Examples of these bacteria are Enterobacter, E. coli, Klebsiella, Serratia, Pseudomonas and Acinetobacter.

Some strains of these bacteria or germs produce enzymes or chemicals which destroy many of the antibiotics we have available and we call these highly resistant organisms.

Normally these bacteria live harmlessly in the bowel but if they get into another area of the body, for example the bloodstream or urinary tract, they can cause infection.

Babies born prematurely are at increased risk of infection due to their immature immune system, low birth weight and their need for invasive procedures such as intubation, central lines etc. Sick newborn babies are also at risk as their body's natural defence mechanism is impaired due to illness.

## **How is the infection spread?**

Bacteria can come from the baby's own gut, from other babies, staff, visitors (including siblings), equipment or the environment.

## **How can the spread of infection be prevented?**

Hand hygiene is the most effective way of stopping infection passing from person to person. We will advise if you need to take any additional precautions.

Barrier nursing is one way of preventing the spread of infection from one person to another in hospital. It means that if your baby has an infection or is more prone to catch an infection, they may need to be nursed in a single room. It also means that nurses dealing with your baby will wear protective clothing. A sign on the door will indicate that your baby is being barrier-nursed.

## **What precautions will staff take?**

Staff have all been trained how to wash their hands correctly and what measures are necessary to prevent the spread of infections. This is monitored regularly. We expect all staff to wash their hands before and after contact with your baby. Staff will also wear protective aprons and gloves when handling your baby.

Your baby's linen will be washed separately.

## **What can I do?**

Make sure you wash your hands before and after contact with your baby. Ask your visitors to do the same. It is OK for you to ask if you are unsure whether a staff member has washed their hands.

If your baby is wearing their own clothes, these should be washed separately on a 60 degree cycle.

## **What treatment will my baby need?**

A decision about treatment will be made based on your baby's medical condition and after discussion between the consultant paediatrician and microbiologist. We will discuss this with you. Antibiotics will normally be given directly into a vein (intravenous antibiotics). Your baby will therefore need to have a cannula or central line through which the antibiotics can be given.

## **Screening for infection**

We will need to send a number of samples to be screened for infection in our Microbiology Department. The samples will include a number of swabs from where the infection was found on your baby's body.

We may also send samples from other areas if your baby is unwell, or to ensure that the bacteria are not in other areas of the body. These may include the tube where your baby's drip enters the skin (if they have one), a rectal swab, which is a sample taken by inserting a swab briefly just inside your baby's rectum (bottom), and/or a sample of faeces.

## **Can I find out more?**

For further information, please ask a member of staff.

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Neonatal Unit on 01384 244364

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/paediatrics-and-neonatology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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