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# Getting Information from the Healthcare Team: Information for Parents

As parents, you are the most important people in your baby’s life and in their care. Your baby’s healthcare team needs you to help provide your baby’s care. There are many ways that you can do this:

* Come to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) as soon as you can after your baby is born. Get to know your baby. Help us learn about his or her patterns, likes, dislikes, and communication. Let your baby hear your voice and feel your touch—they are comforting and familiar to your baby.
* Learn what care you can provide for your infant (for example, taking his or her temperature, diaper changes, bathing, feeding, and calming your baby).
* If the healthcare team uses words you don’t under- stand, ask for an explanation.
* Talk with your baby’s caregivers often. It helps to write down questions, anything that worries you, or things about your baby to share. Talk with your baby’s bedside nurse and the doctor or nurse practitioner.
* Learn everything you can about your baby’s strengths and differences.
* Talk to your baby’s provider or nurse about when you can start kangaroo care. This is a special type of holding in which your infant

is placed on your bare chest and covered with a blanket. Many studies have shown benefits for both baby and parent from this type of holding. Kangaroo care provides warmth, love, and comfort to your baby and should happen daily when your baby is stable.

In this unit, the best way/time to participate is

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We ask that you respect the privacy of other babies and not ask questions about them or discuss them with others.

It’s important to take care of yourself, because your baby needs you. Spend time talking with your family and friends each day. Discuss your feelings and concerns. Find friends or family who can help with other daily tasks or offer support. It might help to talk to a social worker or chaplain. Tell the staff if you are having difficulty eating or sleeping.

Don’t forget to ask your NICU team for information about support groups or websites that might be helpful.