



# NICU FAMILY AND FRIENDS GUIDELINES

**Our mission in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is to provide excellent medical care for your baby and support for you and your family. We encourage parents and family, as important members of the medical team, to participate in the care of your baby as much as you can.**

**Below is a list of guidelines that should be followed to ensure the best and safest care of your baby during his or her NICU stay:**

## **VISITING HOURS**

**The NICU is open to adult family members and friends 24 hours, every day.**

- All visitors and friends, unless specified by the parents, must be with one of the parents to visit the baby's room. In most cases, only 2-4 people may enter the baby's room at one time.
- Please check in at the nursery front desk when you arrive.

## **Siblings are also welcome to visit the NICU.**

- Siblings under age 12 must be watched by an adult at all times, including in the waiting areas.
- They will be screened for illness at the front desk prior to entering the NICU, and may visit each day from 8 a.m. until 8:30 p.m.
- For safety reasons, siblings under the age of 18 are not allowed to stay in the NICU overnight. Other children under the age of 12 who are not siblings should not visit infants in the NICU.
- Young siblings should sit in a chair or be held by a parent while in the patient room. Children should not sit/play on the floor, or walk around the patient room.
- For the safety of our infants, there may be other visitor restrictions in place during cold and flu season. These will be posted at the front desk.

**Proper behavior is expected of all parents and visitors. Raised voices, foul or abusive language, or other disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.**



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## STAFF COMMUNICATION

You are welcome to be present for rounds with the medical team during the day, but can also be updated at other times during the day or overnight. Your baby's nurse can answer questions for you at any time; however, we ask that you limit phone calls during change of shift (between 6:30 and 7:30 each morning and evening) to allow the nurses to give report without interruptions.

If you would like to speak with a doctor, please let your nurse know. If a doctor is not available to come to the bedside right away, we can arrange for a visit or phone call at another time.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your baby's care that are not answered by the bedside nurse, other staff is available to assist you. This includes the charge nurses on duty for the shift, and the Clinical Services Manager (CSM). The UAMS Patient Relations office is also available and can be reached by phone at 501-296-1039.

## PRIVACY:

- You will be asked to provide a password in order to receive information about your baby over the phone. You can share this password if you like, but whoever has it will be able to hear medical information about your baby.
- Before you leave the hospital after discharge, you will need to complete some simple paperwork. Please be sure to give us several contact numbers in case the medical team needs to reach you while you are away. You may write these numbers on the white communication board in your baby's room.
- Please respect the privacy of other families in the unit. You may take pictures or video of your own infant, but not of other babies. We will not be able to give you any information about other babies or families in the NICU.

## STAYING OVERNIGHT:

- Two individuals who have been issued a badge may sleep separately in the baby's room overnight. The curtain for the family area in the room may be closed for breast feeding/pumping privacy, but should remain open if more than one person is sleeping in the family area. You may request linens from your baby's nurse. These should be stored in the drawers beneath the sofa, and the bed returned to its couch position by 8 a.m. each morning.
- Appropriate sleeping attire must be worn when staying overnight. Except for sleeping and showering, shoes must be worn in the unit at all times.



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## PREVENTING INFECTION:

All parents and visitors who enter the NICU must be in good health.

**Please do not visit if you are ill, which includes:**

- Fever • Cough • Vomiting or diarrhea • Runny nose • Sore throat • Rash

Remember to wash your hands before and after touching or holding your baby. There are also hand gel dispensers and device-cleaning stations (with wipes for your cell phone or other devices) around the unit.

## ITEMS FROM HOME:

- Certain appliances may not be used in the baby's room. These include, but are not limited to, the following: hairdryers, curling irons, fans, and separate TVs or gaming stations.
- Baby care items, such as bottles, pacifiers, swings, bouncy seats and radios, must meet hospital standards and are provided to your baby as needed. Please do not bring these items from home.
- Personal items such as blankets, clothes, hats or bows, or door signs can be brought to the NICU. However, please do not tape or otherwise mount anything to the painted walls or cabinets in your baby's room, as this can damage the walls and surfaces.
- Home infant safety or monitoring devices that have not been approved by the UAMS Clinical Engineering Department may not be used in the NICU.
- If you have any questions about other devices or equipment, please check with your baby's nurse.
- Please keep your personal items in the family area of your baby's room. UAMS is not responsible for lost or stolen items, so please keep your valuables with you at all times.

## OTHER:

- Please keep your cell phones on vibrate or silent when in the baby's room, to help us keep noise levels to a minimum.
- To maintain the cleanliness of your baby's room, a separate family area and kitchen is available for eating. Drinks with covered lids may be kept with you in your baby's room, but please do not bring any food items into your baby's room.
- UAMS is a smoke-free campus. This includes e-cigarettes and vaping devices.