



Photo by Iuliia Bondarenko via Pixabay

Caring For Your Newborn Who May Show Signs of Substance or Medication Withdrawal

Information on Eat Sleep Console

momsandkidssask.saskhealthauthority.ca

Congratulations and Welcome

If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare providers.

We look forward to working together with you as a team.

Table of Contents

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)	3
What is Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)?	3
What are Common Symptoms of NAS?	3
What to Expect While in Hospital?	3
What is Eat Sleep Console?	4
Eating: What is Normal?	4
Sleeping: What is Expected?.....	4
Consoling: What To Do?	5 - 6
Breastfeeding / Chest Feeding	7
Newborn Care Diary	8
What if My Baby Can't Eat Well, Sleep or Console?	9
When Will We Go Home?	9
Questions	10
Notes	11



momsandkidssask.saskhealthauthority.ca

What is Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)?

You may hear Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome or NAS mentioned and wonder what it means. NAS happens when a baby experiences withdrawal from some medications or substances exposed to during pregnancy. Most babies will show symptoms of NAS within 2 to 3 days after birth, but some can take longer. If you can, plan to stay in the hospital with your baby until the symptoms are well managed. We will help you learn when that is.

What are Common Symptoms of NAS?

It is important to remember that symptoms can be different for each baby, but can include things like:

- Problems eating or sleeping
- Difficulty calming or consoling
- Need for sucking when not hungry
- Tremors or shaking of arms and legs
- Fussiness
- Frequent spit ups
- Loose or watery poops
- Losing too much weight

What to Expect While in Hospital?

Your healthcare team will support you so you can support your baby. You are the most important part of the care team! Expect a longer hospital stay for you and your infant. During assessments, you will be asked some questions, as you will know best how your baby is doing. Let your nurse know when the baby is done feeding, this is the best time to check in. If your baby is having trouble eating, sleeping, or consoling, let your nurse know. These are the symptoms we want to help manage the most.

What is Eat Sleep Console?

We have learned that the most important signs that your baby is adjusting after birth is if they can eat and sleep well, and can be consoled. We also know that you are the most important person to help your baby adjust.



Photo by Luiza Braun on Unsplash

Eating: What is Normal?

Most babies eat at least 8 times (and sometimes more often) in 24 hours, and it is normal for them to need to eat at night. Your baby should be fed whenever they show signs of being hungry, such as opening their mouths, sucking their hands, turning their head towards you. Some babies need extra support to get started. No matter how you choose to feed your baby, your healthcare team will help you.

Sleeping: What is Expected?

Babies tend to sleep for short periods of time. Ideally, your baby will sleep for at least 1 hour between feeds. Sometimes, they sleep better when held closely to you. If you feel tired, have someone else hold the baby or lay them down in their bassinette. You will get to know what your baby prefers, and use what works best for both of you. Your baby sleeping in their own space is the safest option, on their back with no soft objects around.

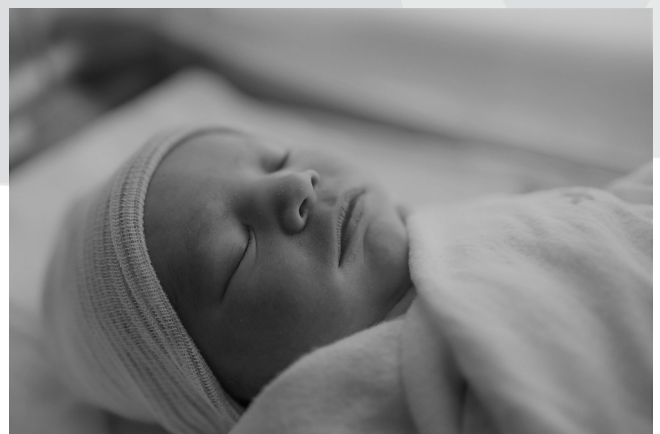


Photo by Jimmy Conover on Unsplash

Consoling: What To Do?

Every baby responds to their surroundings in their own way. All babies can get overwhelmed when their surroundings are busy. They tell us they are stressed by the way they react. By watching your baby, you can tell when they are stressed, and offer comfort to calm them.

Here are some things you can try:



Photo by Sergiu Vălenaș on Unsplash

Rooming In

One of the best things you can do is keep your baby with you whenever possible. Your baby will feel safest and most comfortable with you.



Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

Create Calm for your Baby

Begin by talking softly and slowly, using your voice to calm them. Holding, gentle swaying and rocking can be helpful too. Wrap your baby in a blanket, keeping their hands close to their chest. Try to keep your room quiet and with the lights low.



Photo by Tim Mossholder on Unsplash

Consoling Continued ...

Skin to Skin

Spend as much time skin to skin with your baby when you are awake.

This helps your baby eat and sleep better, and can help calm them.

Ask your healthcare team how to do skin to skin safely.



Photo by Samuel Lee via Pixabay



Saskatchewan Health Authority. Porter R, Knoppert A. 2014. Personal collection.

Feed at early hunger cues

Feed your baby whenever they show signs of hunger and until they are content. If still showing signs of wanting to suck after a good feed, offer a soother or clean finger.



Photo by Fanny Renaud on Unsplash

Limit Visitors

This helps to keep a calm, quiet environment for you both and promotes time for you to bond with your baby.

Have a plan for a support person to help care for your infant.

As a parent, you have a very special role.

Your love and care are most important to your baby at this time.

Breastfeeding / Chest Feeding

It is generally safe to breastfeed/chest feed, if you choose. Keeping your baby close and offering breastmilk/chest milk can be very helpful to treat NAS symptoms.

Talk with your healthcare team if you have any questions or need some help getting started.

We can also support you to express your breastmilk/chest milk with your hands or a pump and feed it back in other ways if you choose.



Photo by PublicDomainPictures via Pixabay

Newborn Care Diary

We will give you a paper to keep at your bedside. You can help the team by keeping track of when your baby eats, marking down their poops and pees, how long they sleep, and how well they can be consoled. Your healthcare team will use this information when they care for you and your baby. It's ok if you don't mark everything down, we can work on it together.

We thank you for your help.

Time	Breast/ Chest Feed (both sides offered) Yes ✓ No X	Other feeding method (how many mL)	Did Baby Feed Well? (if no, describe) Yes ✓ No X	Sleep (If less than one hour describe) More than One Hour? ✓ Less than One Hour? X	Did Baby Console in 10 Minutes? (if no, describe) Yes ✓ / No X	Poop ✓	Pee ✓	Other Comments

What if My Baby Can't Eat Well, Sleep or Console?

We will always work with you to keep you and your baby together so you can do skin to skin, feed your baby, and watch for withdrawal together with your team.

However, some babies do need extra care or medical treatment for their withdrawal. Sometimes this means the baby will be moved to a specialized care unit to have closer monitoring. Some babies may require medication to manage their symptoms. We still encourage you to be with your baby as much as possible because the treatment and care you can provide is still what is best for your baby.



Photo by Aditya Romansa on Unsplash

When Will We Go Home?

The length of time you spend in hospital with your baby will depend on their withdrawal symptoms, as well as how well they are eating and if their weight loss or gain is within normal range. Some babies are ready to go home in 3 to 4 days, others it may take a little longer. If you can, plan to stay with your baby as much as you can.



Saskatchewan Health Authority. Gardypie C. 2014. Personal collection.

**If you have any questions, please let your
Healthcare Providers know.**



Photo by Andrae Ricketts on Unsplash

**Thank you for the opportunity to work with you
and your baby!**



momsandkidssask.saskhealthauthority.ca



CS-PIER-0094

Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.

PIER—Patient Information and Education Resource

DECEMBER 2023

