Mercy Health
Care first

Your important health information

Recognising serious illness in your baby

Name _____

Date of birth _____ **Time of birth** _____

This information is for families who have had a baby and leave hospital in less than 24 hours after the birth.
In this situation, it is important to observe your baby's behaviour and monitor baby for any signs of infection or being unwell.
Please use the table on the next page to record your observations (tick normal or abnormal) of the following:

1. **Temperature:** Measure the temperature in the arm pit, (normal temperature is 36.5- 37.5ºC)
2. **Breathing rate per minute:** Count the breathing rate when your baby is settled, count for a full one minute (normal breathing rate is 40-60 per minute)
3. **Signs of difficulty in breathing**: Fast breathing (more than 60 per minute), working hard for breathing with indrawn ribs with breaths or noisy breathing/grunting)
4. **Skin colour:** Watch for any signs of baby's skin colour changing (becoming pale, white or less pink, or mottled)
5. **Activity level:** Check if baby is unusually drowsy (*e.g. difficult to wake to feed, less active etc.)* or seems unwell or cannot be settled

This should be done before each feed or at least every 6 hours until your baby is 48 hours old.

If the observations are abnormal, if your baby looks unwell or if you are concerned, please seek medical advice:

- Mercy Hospital for Women: Emergency Department on 03 8458 4000 or your Maternity Group Practice midwife.
- Werribee Mercy Hospital: Emergency Department on 03 8754 3470.

Please call 000 if you have urgent concerns with your baby.

Mercy Hospitals Victoria Ltd
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Community Reviewed Making information easier to read.

Date and time	Activity		Feeding		Colour		Temperature normal (36.5- 37.5ºC)		Breathing rate		Ease of breathing	
	Normal	*Abnormal (drowsy, not waking up for feeds or lethargic)*	*Normal*	*Abnormal (not waking up for feeds or refusing to feed)*	*Normal*	*Abnormal (pale or flushed or mottled)*	*Normal*	*Abnormal*	*Normal*	*Abnormal (fast - more than 60 per minute)*	*Normal*	*Abnormal (grunting, chest in drawings)*

Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

Mercy Hospital for Women, Heidelberg
Emergency Department
Phone: 03 8458 4000

Werribee Mercy Hospital
Maternity Services
Phone: 03 8754 3400

Acknowledgements

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This document provides general information only and is not intended to replace advice about your baby's health from a qualified practitioner. If you are concerned about your baby's health, you should seek advice from a qualified practitioner.