

Returning home with my baby in opioid withdrawal



Congratulations! You feel ready to return home with your baby. The medication started in the hospital will continue at home. This fact sheet provides information to help with this step.

What should I expect when I return home?

In general, when your baby leaves the hospital, he or she is soothed. However, the baby is still on medication.

It may be that *name of baby*



- will be irritable and cry often
- will be sleeping poorly
- will have difficulty drinking

Over time, these signs will gradually disappear.

In the new environment

At home, your baby's reactions won't be related only to withdrawal. The hospital is the only place he or she has known since birth. Everything will be different at home: noise, light, smells, etc. Like any baby, yours could react to this change. It also depends on the baby's temperament. Over the next few days, he or she might therefore be a little more irritable than usual.

How can I help my baby?

- > Continue giving your baby the withdrawal medication, as you did at the hospital. One dose should be given every 4 hours. Follow the schedule given to you.
- > Continue to reassure him or her, as you did at the hospital:
 - hold the baby skin-to-skin occasionally
 - talk to him or her softly
 - rock the baby
 - sing lullabies
 - create a calm environment, not too noisy, with soft lighting
- > Sometimes, no matter what you do, you don't know why your baby is crying. Try to stay present and calm. This will help your baby to trust you.



Where should I store the medication?

Store it at room temperature, in a place where no child can reach it. Ideally, put it in a locked cabinet.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

- 1 Give the baby the forgotten dose as soon as you think of it.
- 2 Then call the Neonatology Unit, and they will give you the new schedule for the next doses.

Never give two doses at the same time. If, by mistake, your baby is given two doses too close together, **go to the hospital immediately**.



So you won't forget, set an alarm for every 4 hours on your smart phone or alarm clock.

How long does withdrawal take?

The time varies from one baby to another.



IMPORTANT

At the end of withdrawal, if you still have any medication, return it to the pharmacy.

What signs should I watch for?

Call the Neonatology Unit if your baby:

- is breathing poorly
- cries, screams, and seems inconsolable
- drinks or nurses poorly, or if you wonder whether he or she is drinking enough



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What does the follow-up involve?

You will have appointments at the hospital every 2 days. The health care team will answer your questions, modify the dosage of medication if necessary, monitor your baby's growth, and make sure he or she is drinking properly.

Where can I go for help?

Caring for a baby in withdrawal requires a lot of energy and self-sacrifice. If you're very tired, or if you're having conflicts in your relationship, call us. Your baby could be admitted back to hospital for a night or a day, for example. This can give you time to rest a little or to reorganize yourself.

Who can I contact with questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the Neonatology Unit at any time:
> 514 890-8412



USEFUL RESOURCES

The guide *From Tiny Tot to Toddler*:
> www.inspq.qc.ca/en/tiny-tot/

To learn more about pregnancy, delivery, or follow-up care, visit our internet site.



Videos, other fact sheets, and more resources are available at:

centredesnaissanceschum.com

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
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