

Loneliness

After the hustle and bustle of Special Care, finally going home can sometimes leave you feeling a bit lonely, especially as you may have been advised against joining baby groups and taking part in other social activities.

So many of the mums and dads at BIBS have felt like this too, that it must surely be normal!

The important thing is for you not to be isolated. If you have made friends in Special Care, stay in touch with them. Parents who have been through similar experiences to you will be able to give you a unique support and maybe even friendship that no-one else can. You may be surprised at how important you become to each other.

Take advantage of offers from family and friends to visit and to help you. This may also be a good time to get in touch with BIBS - maybe we can help each other.

You are not on your own!

Enjoy

You and your baby may have traveled a difficult road to get to where you are now. All parents will tell you how quickly this time with her passes, so be sure to treasure it. Be proud of your achievement

Babies in Buscot Support (BIBS) is a charitable organisation run on a volunteer basis by parents who have had children in Buscot Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).

It exists to support parents and family of premature and sick newborn babies in the Reading area.

Our charity is devoted to:

Supporting and encouraging the parents of premature and sick newborn babies

Raising the awareness of special care babies and their needs

Fundraising to provide the latest technology and equipment for Buscot ward to ensure that every special care baby has the best start in life possible

BIBS



Babies In Buscot Support

Babies in Buscot Support
Buscot Ward
Royal Berkshire Hospital
Reading
RG1 5AN

<http://www.bibs.org.uk>

Tel: 0845 166 9067

Registered Charity no. 297821

© Copyright BIBS 2004

Going Home - a Babies in Buscot Support guide to special care

Going Home



A guide for parents making preparations for going home

As always, BIBS is not offering medical advice, just practical tips from mums and dads who have shared the experiences you are now facing.

Don't Panic

Although you may have waited a long time to bring your baby home, actually doing so can be daunting. But don't panic: there are a lot of people waiting to support you.

Firstly, your baby's doctor will not have discharged her unless she's well enough to go home. You may be able to stay in one of the flats on Buscot Ward in advance of going home, and it can be a good idea to take advantage of this. It means that you can have sole care of your baby, but still have the comfort of knowing that medical help is on hand.

Once you get her home, your baby's health visitor will become a regular caller. If your baby is under the care of the Community Nursing Team, expect visits from them too.

GP Services

Your baby is likely to have a repeat prescription for her various medications for a while to come. Check with your GP Practice whether you can order repeat prescriptions over the phone or by email. When you do need to take your baby to the surgery, ask if a side room can be made available so that you do not have to wait in the waiting room. This will help avoid unnecessary infections.

Benefit Claims

If your baby takes a lot of extra looking after and needs attention that other babies may not, it may be worth looking into suitable benefit claims. Your health visitor or community nurse will help you decide whether or not a claim is appropriate.

Oxygen Babies

If your baby is coming home on oxygen, there are a couple of things to be aware of.

Of course, the installation of the oxygen concentrator will come first and the engineer who visits your home will explain the various options available to you. You may have the choice, for example, of having a single oxygen point in the house, with a long hose to move between rooms, or you may prefer to have several oxygen points in various rooms, with shorter hoses. The engineer will help you decide.

Be aware that the concentrator makes a hissing noise, and that it gives out a fair amount of heat. Some people find this a little distracting, while others barely notice it. You may have the chance to visit a house where oxygen is already installed, so that you can see exactly how it works and where is the best place to put your concentrator.

When choosing a pushchair, make sure the shopping basket is strong enough to take the weight of the oxygen cylinder. Going out and about with oxygen is not as troublesome as it may at first seem.

When travelling in the car, you may like to secure the oxygen cylinder so that it cannot move about in the event of an accident. You may also like to keep a spare cylinder, nasal cannula and tape in the boot of the car, in case you are out of the house for longer than you intended.

Your car insurers, home insurers and the fire service all need to be informed that you have oxygen in the house.

Get Organised

Take the time before your baby comes home to get organised. List all relevant phone numbers, such as your GP and health visitor, and keep them handy. You may find that you don't need them after all, but having them ready can be reassuring.

Remember that in the event of a problem or query, your GP or community nurse will usually be your first point of call.

If you are using a breast pump from the ward, you'll need to return it as soon as your baby is discharged. If you intend to feed your baby breast milk, you can buy or rent a pump, or breastfeed naturally.

If you are bringing your baby home in a car, you'll need a car seat appropriate for her weight. Make sure you are happy with how the seat fits into your car - you don't want to keep your baby waiting in the car park!

Children's Ward

Realistically, if your baby has been in Special Care for a long time, it's not unusual for her to need an additional stay or two on the Children's Ward at some stage. The Children's Ward is a very different environment from Special Care but be assured that the care your baby receives there is no less skillful and no less tender.

Pharmacy Services

Call some local pharmacies to check the various services they offer. Do they deliver oxygen cylinders? Can they collect prescriptions from the GP for you? Will they order items in advance of having a prescription, to cut down your waiting time?