



THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER

Dear Parents:

Cold and flu season will soon be here! This year's flu season is predicted to be a difficult one. Even babies who are patients in the hospital may get colds or the flu. Premature and sick babies are at a significantly higher risk for developing serious complications if they get sick with a cold or the flu.

Here are some things you can do to protect your baby during this time:

1. **CAREFUL HANDWASHING:** Remember to scrub your hands from your fingertips to your elbows for three minutes before you enter the nursery, or use the Waterless Surgical Scrub as directed. If you touch your face or eyes or blow your nose, wash your hands once again for at least 10 seconds or use waterless foam, before touching your baby.
2. Make sure that your baby's other visitors are not sick when they visit.
3. If you have a cold or flu symptoms yourself, you should **STAY HOME** until you are symptom free for 24 hours. This is the best way to prevent spreading infection to your baby. If you are providing breast milk to your baby, you may continue to give the baby your expressed milk. You should ask someone who is not sick to bring your milk to the nursery.
3. We encourage you and regular visitors of your baby to get a flu shot unless it is not recommended by your personal doctor. Contact your personal doctor, local health department, or local VNA to get vaccinated. Other brothers and sisters of NICU babies should also receive the flu vaccine. It can be given now until mid November. Always check with your doctor if you think you have missed the chance for a flu shot – it may not be too late!

Sometimes during the flu season, we find that we must change the nursery's visiting policy and limit who can come into the nurseries. This happens because we must try to prevent further sickness in the babies. We will contact you about this if it becomes necessary.

Please ask your baby's doctor or nurse if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

The Neonatal Staff

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