

NICU/NBN/L&D/OB-GYN - Unit Practice Manual
John Dempsey Hospital-Department of Nursing
The University of Connecticut Health Center

PROTOCOL FOR: Hospitalized Infant: Care of the Family

DESIRED PATIENT

OUTCOMES: Families will be offered support during their infant's hospitalization

CLINICAL
ASSESSMENT

AND CARE: Historical Data

1. Explore with the family past and present coping mechanisms used in time of stress to see if behaviors that were beneficial in the past will be appropriate for this problem.
2. Identify the support system and who normally is the strongest in a crisis situation.
3. Review the role each member plays in the family under normal circumstances and how these roles have altered. Role designation changes are common when crisis occurs.
4. Evaluate those factors which might increase the family's stress during the crisis i.e., loss of income or lack of insurance.

Present Perceptions

1. Discuss the family's perceptions of their infant's hospitalization.
2. Validate what the parent's perception of their infant's condition is by asking them to repeat to you what they have been previously told about their baby.
3. Speak in simple terms. Make explanations short and concise. Repeat information several times.
4. Avoid use of qualifiers and statistics to which parents may attach undue importance.
5. Continuously validate with the parents their interpretation of the problem/condition by having them restate it in their own words.

Present Coping Techniques

1. Discuss with the family how they feel they are coping. Validate appropriateness of feelings, using a non-judgmental approach.
2. Find an adequate support system for the family if they are unable to find one of their own. Refer to social worker, psych liaison, financial aid, minister of religious preference, support group, etc.

Protocol

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PATIENT TEACHING: Refer to Teaching Plan: Family Education of the Hospitalized
Infant

APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee

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