

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CARERS

Heart murmurs in the newborn



What is a heart murmur?

A heart murmur is an extra noise which is heard when the heart is listened to with a stethoscope.

Does a heart murmur mean there is heart problem?

No. Most babies with heart murmurs have completely normal hearts. These babies have what are known as “innocent” or “normal” heart murmurs. However, sometimes a heart murmur can be a sign that there is a problem with the heart, like a small hole or a narrowing, and this is why all babies with heart murmurs are reviewed.

How will I know if my baby has a heart problem?

Your baby will be seen in clinic within 4-6 weeks. If the murmur can still be heard and the doctor is not sure that it is an “innocent” or “normal” heart murmur then we will arrange a heart scan for your baby. Some babies require an earlier scan (within 1-2 weeks); this depends on the type of murmur that has been heard when your baby was assessed.

What should I look out for?

Most babies with heart murmurs remain well, but if your baby becomes unwell they should be seen urgently by a doctor. Signs to look out for include breathing difficulties, breathless or sweaty when feeding, poor feeding, blue colour of skin and lips or mottled skin.

What should I do if my baby becomes unwell?

You should seek urgent medical advice. Explain that your baby has a heart murmur and has become unwell.

Points to remember:

- A heart murmur is an extra noise heard when listening with a stethoscope.
- Most babies with heart murmurs have completely normal hearts.
- A heart murmur can sometimes be a sign of an underlying heart problem.
- **IF YOUR BABY BECOMES UNWELL SEEK URGENT MEDICAL ADVICE.**

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet (if relevant) please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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