

### Contacts:

- Sherwood Birthing Unit - 01623 672244
- 24 Hour Emergency Midwife - 01623 655722.

### Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

# Protecting your baby from low blood sugar

You have been given this leaflet because your baby is at increased risk of having low blood sugar and it is recommended that they have some blood tests to check their blood glucose level.

Your baby's blood glucose is tested by a heel-prick blood test which will give a result in a few minutes.

### Things to do to help avoid low blood sugars

**Antenatal colostrum collection.** You can pick up a kit from the maternity ward reception (1st floor) or request one from your community midwife - this can be done from 36 weeks (unless you have risk factors for premature birth, and then would suggest waiting until 37 weeks). You can then bring your colostrum to your birth room for use after baby is born.

**Skin-to-skin contact** with your baby on your chest helps keep your baby calm and warm and helps establish breast/chestfeeding. You can do this any time in the postnatal period to keep your baby warm or to encourage feeding.

**Keep your baby warm** and put a knitted hat on them for the first few days while they are in hospital.

**Offer an early feed** within the first hour after birth to help get your baby off to a good start. Feed every three hours or earlier in response to feeding cues your baby may be displaying. Feed for as long or as much as your baby wants.

**Express your milk** if your baby is unable to breast/chestfeed and give any colostrum you express. A member of staff will show you how to feed this to your baby using a syringe or a feeding cup.

### What happens if your baby's blood sugar is low?

If the blood glucose test result is low, your baby should feed as soon as possible and you can provide skin-to-skin contact.

If you are breast/chest feeding and your baby does not feed, a member of staff will give you hands-off support to feed or express some milk.

If your baby has not breastfed/chestfed, and you have been unable to express any of your milk, your baby may be prescribed a dose of dextrose (sugar) gel which can be an effective way to bring your baby's glucose level up; or you may be advised to offer infant formula (via a feeding cup).

Very occasionally, if babies are too sleepy or unwell to feed, or if the blood glucose is still low after feeding, they may need to go to the Neonatal Unit. This care would be discussed with you at the time.

In most cases, low blood glucose quickly improves within 24-48 hours and your baby will have no further problems.

### What to do if you are worried about your baby

**It is important that you tell staff if you are worried that there is something wrong with your baby.** Some things to watch out for are:

- Your baby is not interested in feeding.
- Your baby is cold.
- Your baby is very sleepy and difficult to wake up.
- Your baby feels floppy when you hold them.
- Your baby is making strong repeated jerky movements.
- Your baby appears to be breathing fast or working hard to breathe.

### Who to call if you are worried:

- In hospital, inform any member of the clinical staff.
- At home, call your community midwife and ask for an urgent visit or advice.
- Out of hours, call NHS 111.
- If you are really worried, take your baby to your nearest Emergency Department or dial 999.