Intermountain® Healthcare

HOMECARE SERIES

Phototherapy

Before using home phototherapy, read the entire contents of this packet. Use the following information as a general guide or supplement to the instructions given by your doctor or nurse. Keep this packet in a safe, accessible place for future use.

Why phototherapy?

Phototherapy is performed on infants who have increased levels of bilirubin in the blood. This increase in bilirubin causes a yellow hue to the skin and eyes — referred to as jaundice. Jaundice is common in newborn babies for the first 3 to 5 days and can be treated with phototherapy. Phototherapy involves exposing the baby's skin to a blue, fluorescent light. This helps break down the bilirubin in the body.

Caring for your baby during phototherapy

Use the record sheet on the back of this handout to write down the events of your baby's care during phototherapy. This handout will tell you what information to write down on the record sheet. Take the record sheet with you to your doctor's visits.

Room Temperature

- Maintain the room temperature at 72°F or higher during phototherapy.
- Use a room thermometer near the phototherapy unit to monitor the room temperature.

Baby Temperature

The baby's temperature should be between 98°F to 100°F during phototherapy. Take the baby's temperature by holding the thermometer under the baby's armpit (axillary temperature).

- Take temperature 2 times when you start therapy or after a one hour interruption.
  - Take temperature before phototherapy
  - Take temperature 20 minutes after therapy begins to determine if the baby's temperature is stable
- Once the baby's temperature is stable, take temperature every 3 to 4 hours.

Temperature below 98°F

1. Remove baby from the phototherapy unit and wrap the baby in blankets.
2. Increase the temperature of the room.
3. Recheck the baby's temperature in 15 minutes. Call the doctor or nurse if the baby's temperature has not changed.
4. Write down the time and temperature on the record sheet.

Temperature over 100°F

1. Remove baby from the phototherapy unit.
2. Decrease the room temperature or move the phototherapy unit to a cooler location.
3. Recheck the baby's temperature in 15 minutes. Call the doctor or nurse if the baby's temperature has not changed.
4. Write down the time and temperature on the record sheet.
5. Wrap or clothe the baby as needed when phototherapy is interrupted or discontinued.

Food and Water Intake

Newborns are usually fed every 3 to 4 hours. Your doctor may recommend extra feedings or water during phototherapy.

1. Write down time and amount of intake on the record sheet.
2. Call the doctor or nurse if the baby has problems with feedings.

Urine Output

1. Write down when you notice an unusual decline in the amount of urine in the diaper.
2. Call the doctor or nurse if your baby does not urinate for 8 hours.

Stool Output

As the body breaks down bilirubin, you may notice the baby's stool change color from black to green.

1. Write down when you notice an unusual change in the color of stool.
2. Call the doctor or nurse if your baby has more than 2 consecutive episodes of diarrhea.

When to call the doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if your baby:

- Has not urinated for 8 hours.
- Has not produced stool for 12 hours.
- Has had more than 2 consecutive episodes of diarrhea.
- Shows signs of increased skin irritation.
- Is extremely irritable.
- Is not interested in eating for 8 hours or longer.
- Has a persistent or yellow-colored vomit.
- Does not maintain a temperature between 98°F to 100°F.

Date	Feedings	Diaper Changes	Stool Color	Minutes of light
1–17	5, 15, 10, 15 **min** 8 **oz**	IIII	green	5, 20, 5, 10, 5
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			
	min **oz**			

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