

## Important Phone Numbers

NICU Direct Line: 504-391-5299  
Intermediate Nursery: 504-391-5298  
Newborn Nursery: 504-391-5614  
Hospital Main Number: 504-392-3131  
Cheri Oser, RNC, BSN, Nursery Manager, NICU/NSY: 504-391-5297  
Joan Rooney, RN, IBCLC, Director of Women/Neonatal Services: 504-391-5220  
Cindy Burke, RN, Nurse Manager L&D/PP: 504-391-5596

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and would like the use of a qualified interpreter or other auxiliary aids and services at no cost, please call Guest Relations at 504-391-5126 or the TDD line at 504-207-1226.



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 **Ochsner**<sup>™</sup>  
Medical Center – West Bank  
**Neonatal Intensive Care Unit**



# Welcome to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Ochsner Medical Center – West Bank

Your infant has been admitted to Ochsner Medical Center – West Bank’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), a highly-specialized center for premature and special needs newborns and infants. Everyone on our staff is dedicated to the health and well-being of your baby. We are honored to serve you and your family.

This brochure provides you important information about the NICU, our staff, and your baby’s care.

Your baby’s doctor’s name is \_\_\_\_\_.



## About the Ochsner Medical Center – West Bank’s NICU

The NICU is designated as a LEVEL III Unit, which provides highly specialized care.

The NICU is a busy area filled with highly sophisticated equipment. Therefore, we encourage you to read this handbook and ask questions so that you will be more comfortable in this environment and understand how the NICU works. We encourage you and your family to visit as often as possible to maintain close contact with your baby. We also ask that you follow the special guidelines outlined in this brochure.

## NICU Staff

We use a team approach to care for infants in our NICU. A variety of medical professionals with special skills care for your infant (24 hours a day, seven days a week). The following is a brief description of our medical staff involved in caring for your baby.

## Physicians

A Neonatologist, a Pediatrician with special training in the care of premature and special needs newborns, leads our medical team. The Neonatologist is in charge of your infant’s overall care, but may ask other physicians and specialists to assist with treatment.

## Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

The Neonatal Nurse Practitioner is a Registered Nurse with advanced training in the care and management of special needs newborns. A Neonatal Nurse Practitioner is in the NICU 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and works closely with the Neonatologist and nursing staff.

## Nurses

NICU nurses, registered professional nurses with special training in the care of premature and special needs newborns, will coordinate the care your infant receives. Before each shift change, an outgoing nurse will give a full report on your baby’s care and condition to the incoming nurse.

## Respiratory Therapists

Respiratory Therapists are trained to care for infants with breathing problems, and to assist doctors and nurses in assessing and treating infants.

## Occupational Therapists

Occupational Therapists (OT) in the NICU help to provide the staff, and caregivers with age-appropriate developmental, feeding, and environmental techniques. The OT’s role focuses on adapting to the environment, promoting calming skills, positioning and handling techniques, oral motor development, stimulation, family involvement, and therapeutic techniques.

## Social Services

The Social Services staff is here to offer emotional support and advice for families during this stressful time by providing information and referrals to community services for financial assistance, counseling, education, support groups, home healthcare, and medical equipment.



## Chaplain

The hospital Chaplain is available to provide spiritual support for you and your family. You may ask your personal Chaplain to visit with you and your baby or you can ask a nurse to contact the hospital Chaplain for spiritual support.

## Other Personnel

Unit Assistants such as nurse's aides, housekeepers, and other personnel help the NICU operate smoothly by completing paperwork, ordering tests and supplies, maintaining equipment, and keeping the areas clean. Various technicians also perform tests that assist the physicians with important clinical information.

## Lactation Center

The Lactation Center offers a variety of supportive breastfeeding services for mothers of NICU babies such as the following:

- Breastfeeding consultation line: 504-391-5195
- Electric breast pumps to use while your child is hospitalized
- Follow-up meeting after your baby is discharged

## Patient Confidentiality

For your baby's privacy, information about his/her condition will be given only to the parents. At the time of your call, we ask you to identify your baby by giving us the five-digit number on your hospital bracelet. We will also provide updates to grandparents with your permission. Grandparents should verify their identity using passwords which will be provided to them. Information about the infant will not be provided to friends or relatives.

## Clothing Guidelines

You may bring clothes for your baby as long as they are soft, washable, and non-confining. Diaper shirts, booties, T-shirts, hats and caps are all good choices. Please wash any items to avoid allergy or skin reactions.

## Appropriate Toys

We encourage you to bring toys for your baby. Toys should be soft and washable and preferably musical, bright, or colorful. Examples of appropriate toys are washable small stuffed animals, non-breakable music boxes and mobiles. Toys should have no small parts or sharp edges. We discourage glass or ceramic items.

When choosing toys to bring, please consider there is not much space in your baby's bed, therefore we recommend small toys. You can also bring family photographs or drawings made by siblings to tape to your baby's bed. You are also welcome to bring battery-operated tape players to play lullabies or special messages from family. We are not responsible for lost or broken items.

## Pain Management and Prevention

Everyone on Ochsner's NICU staff is committed to pain prevention and management for your infant. As an Ochsner patient, each infant is assessed for pain on admission and at routine intervals using a scale to rate infant pain.

It is important to understand that with today's treatments most pain can be lessened and/or controlled. Appropriate use of environmental, behavioral and pharmacological interventions can prevent, reduce or eliminate pain in many situations. The healthcare staff will teach you signs to look for should your infant experience pain or discomfort and the measures that can be provided to comfort your infant.

## Discharge Planning

Infant CPR and care classes for parents and caregivers are offered weekly in the NICU. To schedule a class, speak with your baby's nurse.

## NICU Visiting Guidelines

We want you to spend time with your baby, and care for him/her as much as possible. We know that it is important to you to be separated from your baby as little as possible. For this reason, our area is open to you most of the day.

At the same time, your baby is here because he or she needs some degree of special care. In order to provide special care, it is necessary for us to have a certain amount of time and space. Newborn babies, born either early and/or sick, do not have the ability to fight infections; therefore we must limit the amount of visitors.

### The following are guidelines when visiting your baby:

1. Parents are welcome on the unit at anytime except 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. You also may be asked to step off the unit during new admissions or at other times of special needs.
2. Visitors are permitted to visit only when accompanied by a parent of the infant. Visitors must be healthy. Anyone with a cough, runny nose, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or a sore throat will not be permitted to visit. Only two persons may visit at a time at the bedside.
3. Only parents of an NICU infant are permitted to be in the unit after 9:00 p.m. The hospital doors are locked from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. so entrance is only permitted through the Emergency Department. For security purposes, you will have to identify yourself to security and they will call the NICU for verification.
4. Babies need their rest to grow and get well to go home to their families and new moms need their rest after delivering their baby. Therefore, we encourage new parents to visit during the day and allow the nighttime for you and your baby to rest.
5. Siblings of your baby must be at least five years old to visit their new brother or sister. Children must be supervised, and must be healthy. Children who are sick and have a fever, cough, runny nose, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, or exposure to a contagious disease such as chicken pox will not be permitted to visit. Children other than your baby's brothers and sisters are not allowed to visit.
6. No food or drinks are permitted on the unit or at your baby's bedside.
7. We ask that you turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices while you are visiting the unit. If you need to make a phone call, a phone is located outside the NICU for you to use.
8. You may use still cameras or videos to take your baby's picture at the nurse's discretion. We want you to take pictures/videos as much as you can; however, we do have a limit to picture-taking if the infant's condition is not stable or when medical procedures are taking place. You may only take pictures of your own baby.
9. We encourage you to spend time with your baby and learn how to provide proper care. All patients are entitled to privacy, so please stay at your baby's bedside during visits.
10. Patient's charts are the property of Ochsner Health System and are our way of tracking your baby's care. Parents may see the chart with the doctor's permission and in the presence of the doctor so that he/she may explain the information.
11. Before entering the NICU, please remove all jewelry (jewelry must remain off during the time with your baby) and scrub your arms from finger tips to elbows for three minutes.
12. You will be asked to fill out a family information sheet. This will provide us with the most current means of contacting you. We need to be able to contact you 24 hours a day.