

Sucrose solution for babies under three months old

Information for parents and guardians

Sucrose solution is a drink containing diluted sugar (24%). When babies under three months old come into hospital they sometimes need to have procedures which may be stressful, uncomfortable or, in some cases, painful for them.

Sucrose solution can be used to help reduce your baby's distress during these procedures. It is not known exactly how the solution works to comfort babies, but it is thought that sucking the sweet substance causes natural chemicals which help to relieve pain to be released in their body. It is thought that breastfeeding a baby during a stressful, uncomfortable or painful procedure can have the same effect.

The types of test and procedures sucrose solution may be used for include blood tests, the heel prick (blood spot) test offered to all babies when they are five days old, cannula insertion (when a thin, flexible tube is inserted into a blood vessel in the lower arm or hand), as well as more complicated procedures. Any tests that your baby needs to have will be explained to you.

How will the sucrose solution be given?

Your baby will be given up to 2ml of specially-made sucrose solution in a plastic syringe immediately before and during the procedure.

Alternatively, if you would like to, and your doctors and nurses agree, you may breastfeed your baby during the procedure. We do not advise that your baby's dummy is dipped in the sucrose solution.

Is sucrose solution safe?

Sucrose solution is not a drug and is completely safe for your baby.

The solution can be repeated as many times as needed for the hospital procedure but should not be given at home.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

The paediatric assessment unit (PAU) by telephone via the main hospital switchboard: 023 8077 7222, ext 4628

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone **023 8120 4688** for help.

www.uhs.nhs.uk/childrenshospital