

Maternity information factsheet

Your care within the high dependency unit (HDU)

You have been given this factsheet because you will be receiving care within the high dependency unit (HDU) at Princess Anne Hospital.

What is the HDU?

The HDU is a room located within the labour ward. It has two beds and provides care for women who need additional support and monitoring before, during and after labour.

Reasons for receiving HDU care

You may receive care in the HDU at any stage during your pregnancy or after giving birth. This may be for a variety of reasons, including:

- severe pre-eclampsia or eclampsia (fits due to high blood pressure)
- serious bleeding before or after birth
- severe infection
- a pre-existing medical condition which needs additional support (including cardiac conditions)
- additional support needed with diabetic control
- ongoing recovery after admission to the intensive care unit

Throughout your stay, your wellbeing will be assessed through a series of observations, including your temperature, blood pressure and pulse. These observations will be undertaken regularly when you are first cared for in the HDU and then less frequently as your wellbeing improves.

The amount of time you will spend in the HDU may vary from a few hours to several days, depending on your wellbeing. When you are well enough to move around and care for yourself independently, you will be able to continue your care on either the Lyndhurst or Burley ward, depending on which is appropriate for you.

When you move to the Lyndhurst or Burley ward, the midwife caring for you will not be based in your room. Instead, you will be cared for by a team of midwives, nursery nurses and maternity care support workers who are also responsible for the wellbeing of other mothers and their babies.

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Visiting your baby in the neonatal unit (NNU)

If your baby is being cared for in the neonatal unit (NNU), you will be taken to see them as soon as you are well enough to do so. This may not be immediately after birth.

If you are not well enough to visit your baby straight away, your partner will be encouraged to visit the NNU and take photographs of your baby for you. Your midwife can also telephone the NNU on your behalf if you would like to make enquiries about your baby's wellbeing.

If you are planning to breastfeed your baby, please discuss this with your midwife so that arrangements for feeding your baby or expressing your breast milk can be made (depending on which is appropriate for you and your baby).

Visitors

One birth partner is allowed to remain with you during your stay in the HDU. If you have a second birth partner, they may visit you between the hours of 9am and 9pm.

For the safety of the other women staying in the HDU, visitors are restricted to birth partners only. You may receive additional visitors once you have moved to one of the postnatal wards.

Alternative visiting arrangements may be considered in exceptional circumstances. However, this will depend on your wellbeing and the overall clinical situation within the HDU. Please speak to the midwife caring for you before you make any arrangements to receive visitors.

Further information

This factsheet is intended to give you information and answer some of your more immediate questions. Please feel free to discuss any further questions and concerns with either the midwife caring for you or the midwife in charge of the labour ward.

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