

*Our goal is
to make your
hospital stay as
pleasant and
safe as possible.*

Keeping Your Baby Safe

At Northwestern Memorial Hospital, we care about the safety and well-being of you and your new baby. In keeping with this view, certain safeguards have been put into place.

In Labor & Delivery, the nurse will attach a band to your baby with your name, as well as the baby's gender, date of birth and medical record number. A matching band is given to you and your significant other. Once on the mother/baby unit, an electronic security sensor is placed on your baby's ankle. This device alerts nursing and security staff if the device is tampered with or if the baby leaves the unit.

Your caregiver will check that your baby's ID bracelet matches your ID bracelet each time the infant is brought to your room. Therefore, it is important to leave the ID bands on until after your baby is discharged. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1



All Northwestern Memorial Hospital staff, volunteers, and doctors must wear a hospital identity badge. There are state and hospital guidelines about who may visit. (Your nurse will explain.)

For safety and security reasons, your baby must travel in the bassinet. Please do not walk in the hall with your baby in your arms.

You have an important role to play in your baby's safety, too. Here are things that you should do.

- Please do not leave your baby alone in your room. At any time, you may have your baby taken back to the nursery.
- Do not remove the baby's ID or security band while in the hospital.
- Leave your ID band on until you and your baby go home.
- If the baby's security band or ID comes off, tell your nurse.
- Ask your visitors to follow visiting guidelines.
- If staff is not familiar to you, ask questions. Only allow hospital staff with IDs to handle your baby. If you are not sure about someone who has come into your room, press your "nurse call" button for immediate assistance.
- If you note anything unusual, use your call light and talk with your nurse. Your nurse is happy to answer any questions you may have.

As an added level of safety, a sample of your baby's DNA has been collected from the inside of your baby's cheek with a cotton swab. This sample is kept in an envelope and would be used if you were separated from your baby. At discharge, you will be given the sample to keep or dispose of as you wish.

Infant Safety – Safe Sleep

In addition to the guidelines/security measures listed above, there are many things you can do to keep your baby safe, both in the hospital and at home. Helping your baby stay safe during sleep is one.

- When sleeping, your baby should be placed in the bassinet/crib on their back.
- Your baby should not sleep in bed with you. Falling asleep with your baby in bed with you may increase your baby's risk of falling, as well as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Other measures to decrease the risk of SIDS:

- Place baby on the back to sleep.
- Use a crib or bassinet with a tight fitting, firm mattress covered by a fitted sheet.
- Do not put toys, pillows, loose bedding, bumper pads, or other items in the crib.
- A one-piece sleeper, sleep sack, or wearable blanket can be used instead of a loose blanket.
- Do not let baby get too hot. Keep your home at a comfortable temperature for a lightly clothed adult.

- Do not share your bed with your baby.
- Include tummy time when your baby is awake. While under adult supervision, place your baby on the stomach for short periods of time. This will help strengthen your baby's neck muscles needed to lift and move the head.
- Breastfeeding your baby also reduces the risk of SIDS.
- Offer a pacifier at sleep times. (Do not use clips or strings with pacifiers; they can cause choking or strangulation.)
- Do not smoke. Do not let anyone smoke around your baby or in your home.
- Your baby should have regular check-ups and be up to date on vaccines.

To learn more about safe sleep and SIDS, see the *Mother and New Baby Care* booklet.

Infant Safety – Falls/Injury Prevention

To prevent falls:

- Never leave your baby alone on a table, bed, counter, sofa, tub or any other raised surface.
- This means if your baby is on a raised surface, you should be within touching distance.
- Don't fall asleep while holding your baby. If you become sleepy after breastfeeding or holding your baby, be sure to place your baby in the crib or bassinet. Please – no bed sharing!

To prevent other injuries:

- Purchase a car seat, rear-facing with 5-point harness. To keep your baby safe, it is important to use and install your car seat correctly. We encourage parents to use the services of a certified car seat technician to avoid errors.
- Please keep small objects and toys with small pieces away from your newborn to prevent choking.
- Never leave your baby alone with pets or small children.

Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

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