

GBS (Group B Streptococcus) Parent information



As discussed with you, your baby is at some risk (although this is low) of developing an infection with group B streptococcus (GBS)

GBS is a very common bug that normally lives in our bodies. Approximately one-third of women 'carry' GBS in their intestines without knowing it. About a quarter of women also have it in their vagina. Most don't know that it is there, as it doesn't usually cause any problems or symptoms. However in rare cases GBS can cause serious illness and even death in newborn babies. Although these cases are unusual, GBS is the most common cause of severe infection in newborns, particularly in the first week of life.

Your baby has been screened for GBS infection and we recommend that you and your baby stay in hospital for at least 24 hours after the birth for observation. Staying in hospital means that if your baby becomes unwell it can be picked up quickly and appropriate treatment started.

Please take your baby to a doctor immediately if your baby shows any of the following signs of infection at any time after going home

- possible abnormal breathing sounds, such as 'grunting' (with each breath out), slow or fast breathing, difficulty breathing or noisy breathing
- change in baby's feeding, vomiting or refusing feeds
- your baby does not wake properly, is weak and unusually quiet
- your baby feels hot **or** has a fever (more than 38°), or feels unusually cold
- high-pitched cry, moaning cry or whimpering
- dislike of being handled, fretful or irritable
- tense, swollen or sunken soft spot on head
- floppy and listless or stiff with jerky movements
- blank, staring or trance-like expression or turns away from bright lights
- skin that is pale, blotchy or turning blue.

Individual discharge instructions

Recommended websites for more information

Baby Centre
www.babycenter.com.au/a1647/group-b-streptococcus

Group B Strep Support
<https://gbss.org.uk/>

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