

What you and your Nurses can do to help:

All babies can and should:

- Be comforted in a quiet room with dim lights
- Have skin to skin contact with mother
- Be wrapped in a blanket (swaddled)
- Be held and cuddled
- Be in a room with dim lights

Doing these things can help the baby's withdrawal symptoms.

Breastfeeding:

If you are taking medication you may still be able to breastfeed, but talk with the doctor **first** to make sure it is safe for your baby. Bottle feeding is always an option.



How long will my baby need to stay in the hospital?

Your baby will stay in the hospital for at least 3-5 days to watch for signs of withdrawal. Babies that need morphine may stay in the hospital for 1-2 weeks.

Going Home:

Once your baby goes home, you will need to see your child's doctor within 24-48 hours.

During your first visit please tell your child's doctor about the medicine you were taking while you were pregnant.

Even after seeing your doctor, look for signs of withdrawal for a few more days. If you see any, call your child's doctor or UNC Pediatrics at (984) 974-6669.

*Approved by Pediatric Education
Committee
9/2017
Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
Task Force*



**Neonatal
Abstinence
Syndrome (NAS)**

*Guide for parents and
family*

What is Newborn Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)?

NAS is a term for a group of signs a baby may have when he/she is withdrawing from prescribed or illegal drugs taken by the mother while she was pregnant.



What causes NAS?

Many types of medicine are passed from mother to baby while pregnant. Drugs like heroin or pain medicine can cause addiction in the mother. These drugs may cause the baby to become dependent on the drugs before birth. Once the baby is born, the baby is no longer getting these drugs so he/she can show withdrawal signs.

How is NAS diagnosed?

When your baby is born, a urine and stool (meconium) sample will be sent for a drug test. The nurses will watch your baby very closely for withdrawal symptoms. They will ask you if you have seen any signs of withdrawal in your baby. Every 4 hours they track your baby's "Opiates wean score" in the computer. These scores are closely monitored during your baby's stay. Higher scores mean that a baby is showing withdrawal signs and may need treatment.



When does NAS occur?

Not all babies who are exposed to opiates during pregnancy will have withdrawal. For infants who were exposed to methadone or suboxone, withdrawal signs happen 48-72 hours after birth.

Symptoms of NAS:

- Fussy
- Crying that will not stop
- High Pitched crying
- Jittery
- Trouble sleeping
- Tight muscle tone
- Restless
- Seizures
- Frequent yawning, stuffy nose, and sneezing
- Poor feeding or does not gain weight
- Throwing up or loose, watery stools
- Less than 8 wet diapers a day
- Fever or unstable temperature

How is NAS treated?

Your infant may require treatment with morphine. Doses may be changed to fit your baby's needs.