

Developmental follow-up of children and young people born preterm

Information for the public

Published: 9 August 2017

www.nice.org.uk

What support and follow-up to expect if your child was born preterm

Most babies who are born early or 'preterm' (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) go on to have healthy childhoods. But they may be more likely than other children to have problems in their growth and development or to need extra support, especially if they were born very early. We want this guideline to make a difference to families of children who were born preterm by making sure that:

- you know what support to expect when your baby first comes home from hospital – and that you are closely involved in planning for this
- health professionals make sure you know what to look out for as your child grows, and you know who to speak to if you have any worries
- your child has extra follow-up visits if needed, including one at the age of 4 if they were born before 28 weeks – this will help to spot any problems before they start school.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your child's health professionals should give you clear information that you can understand at every stage and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

They should also:

- keep you fully informed about what's happening with your baby's care in hospital
- explain and make sure you understand the results of any assessments your child has
- ask for your permission to share information with other professionals who will work with your child as they grow up, for example your child's school.

If you can't understand the information you are given, tell your health professional.

Read more about [making decisions](#).

Where can I find out more?

The organisation below can give you more advice and support.

- [Bliss](#), 0808 801 0322

NICE is not responsible for the content of this website.

We wrote this guideline with the parents of children who were born early and with staff who support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-2627-5