

What does it mean to care for an infant who has been affected by prenatal substance exposure?

Through a screening, a medical professional determined your infant was exposed to a substance during pregnancy that may cause symptoms for your baby as it grows.

- High pitched cries or being very fussy
- Stiff arms, legs and back
- Trouble sleeping
- Being extra sensitive to light, sounds, and touch
- Shaking, jitters, or lots of sucking
- Not eating well or having problems with feedings
- Throwing up
- Fast breathing or stuffy nose
- Fever or sweating
- Sneezing or yawning more than usual
- Diaper rash due to loose or watery poop
- Redness on the face, back of head, and/or legs due to jitters or moving around a lot
- Trouble gaining weight
- Seizures

Feeling overwhelmed?

**Reach out to
pa211.org/get-help
or
Call 2-1-1**

Assistance is available for you.

Be there for your baby as much as you can

Everyday is a new day for you and your baby. Talk to your medical team if you have any questions or concerns.

- Hold your baby skin to skin
- Wrap the baby tight using a blanket or sleep sack so they feel safe
- If the baby is fussy, rock them and talk to them in a soft voice

Information and Referrals

Compass Mark. 717-299-2831
Get Help NOW 1-800-662-HELP

Medications for Addiction Disorders

ARS Treatment Centers 717-449-9034
Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health
Addiction Medicine. 1-800-662-HELP
Union Community Care 717-299-6371
WellSpan
Addiction Medicine. . . . 1-844-WARM-LINE (24/7)

Recovery Support for Individuals and Families

Donegal Substance Abuse
Alliance. 717-492-4596
The RASE Project. 717-295-3080

Pregnancy and Parenting Support Services

Foundations 717-812-MOMS (6667)
ReNew 717-399-3213
STEPS 717-544-4305
text. 717-669-2485



For FAQ and update to information
lancasterjoiningforces.org/SafeCare

LANCASTER COUNTY



FOR SUBSTANCE AFFECTED INFANTS AND CAREGIVERS

Plans of Safe Care provide community support for the protection of caregivers and infants with focus on the:

- Health and Development of Baby
- Strengths of the Family
- Needs of the Family

What causes newborn withdrawal?

During pregnancy, drugs and medicines can get into the baby's blood. Babies can get used to these drugs while they are still growing in your body. After the babies are born, they may start to show signs of withdrawal when they are no longer getting these drugs. We care about infants who are affected by substance withdrawal at birth because the process can be painful for babies and even cause medical and other problems. There is support for caregivers and the infant during and beyond the withdrawal process.



How do we know this is withdrawal?

Medical providers diagnose withdrawal based on the symptoms they see in a baby. The screening used may identify the substances causing symptoms. Every baby is different. Some will show signs of being affected by prenatal substance exposure even if only small doses of drugs were taken during pregnancy. Other infants will show mild signs even if they were exposed to large doses of drugs during pregnancy. **Most babies will start to show signs of withdrawal within 1 to 5 days after birth.** Use the reference of potential symptoms listed in this brochure to determine your child's extent of withdrawal. Most of the time, withdrawal symptoms ease after a few weeks and go away by the time the baby is six months old. Other developments associated with prenatal substance exposure may show up later in childhood.

Does my baby need regular medical care?

Yes. Every baby needs to see the doctor regularly, in the first year of life and beyond. So, be sure to keep all of your appointments and call with any questions.

How is newborn withdrawal treated?

The treatment for a newborn in withdrawal depends on the symptoms. Care may include monitoring, medication, and comfort measures, and parent involvement. All newborns need good care. However, a baby in withdrawal needs special care to help them rest, eat and develop normally.

FEED your baby when they seem hungry and until they seem satisfied. Allow for baby to rest during feedings. Gently burp your baby after feeding.

What are special care suggestions for my baby?

➤ Closeness

- Spend as much time as possible with your baby. Hold, sing or talk softly to your baby and just keep your baby close.
- Sleep in the same room with your baby (**not in the same bed**). Always put your baby to sleep on his or her back, in their own crib or bassinet, on a firm mattress with no stuffed animals, blankets or pillows.
- Hold your baby skin-to-skin, during breastfeeding or any time. This closeness comforts your baby — and may ease some symptoms of withdrawal.

➤ Quiet, calm, and consistency

- Limit visitors. Your baby will do better with fewer people and less stimulation.
- Keep things quiet - voices, music, and phones should be soothing and low.
- Avoid too much of anything: bright lights, heat and cold, lots of “fun” toys or games. A baby in withdrawal needs rest, not excitement.
- Stick to a routine - your baby will feel reassured by a regular schedule of feedings, naps, and cuddles.

➤ Comfort positions and pressures

- Try different ways of holding your baby.
- Experiment with massage and touch. Many babies are soothed by firm, rhythmic strokes and pats. Try patting your baby's back and bottom as you walk, sway, or rock. (Avoid light, feathery touch – this irritates many babies.) Every baby responds differently so watch your baby's reaction.

If your baby does not like something you are trying, stop and try something else. If nothing seems to work, call your health care professionals for help.

➤ Patience and attention

- Notice your baby's behaviors and symptoms. Write down what you see. Discuss these things with your baby's doctor. Many things you notice about your baby are cues to what your baby likes or needs.
- Be responsive. As you learn how your baby communicates, you will learn how to respond to what your baby is telling you.
- Be patient with your baby – and with yourself. The newborn period can be intense, and withdrawal can pose an additional challenge. Reach out for support as you and baby learn together.

Take time to learn your baby's cues. Cues are a baby's body language to communicate how they are feeling and what they need. Being aware of a baby's cues will allow the caregiver/parent to begin to build a relationship with their newborn.

