

Developmental care: a guide to the latest products

Developmental care refers to a range of strategies designed to improve the neonatal unit environment to reduce distress in a premature or sick baby. Developmental care interventions can have positive effects on neural and physiological development and include: reducing painful stimulations; reducing noise and light (eg ear muffs, incubator covers); minimising handling and permitting longer periods of sleep; ensuring early contact with caregivers (eg skin-to-skin kangaroo care); using positioning aids and using a dummy (soother/pacifier) to provide comfort and promote non-nutritive sucking.

Skin-to-skin nursing at birth using the HugMee support sling

The HugMee support sling was developed specifically to facilitate and promote skin-to-skin contact in the immediate period after delivery, taking into account the particular needs following a caesarean section delivery. The HugMee is part of the Benjamin Care range available from Delta Medical International. It is fully adjustable, allowing

the baby to be positioned appropriately, promoting optimum skin-to-skin contact and ensuring that the newborn infant is kept warm and secure.

Two openings in the sling allow the insertion of hands to touch the baby, while a cut-away in the back allows access for any lines or monitoring leads.



The HugMee is washable at up to 90°C for infection control purposes.



Claire's Nest by Cuski.

Neonatal nests offer security and boundaries for premature babies

Claire's Nest, designed by Sister Claire Ellerby and created by Cuski Baby Ltd, helps to mimic the safety of the womb and support normal physical development in premature infants. It is said to provide the optimum environment to contain and support the position of the baby. The baby is comfortably contained by two soft but firm boundaries, positioned around the body and head of the baby. Two wide straps on either side of the nest are used to provide security and help support the normal flexed posture experienced while in the womb.

Using a soother provides comfort and promotes non-nutritive sucking

Non-nutritive sucking is important for oral motor skills and sensory development. The potential benefits to babies in neonatal care include improved physiological stability, reduced stress during minor procedures, support for the development of the suck reflex and speeding up the transition from tube-to-enteral-to-full suck feeding.

MAM Premie soothers are made of one-piece silicone with particularly small teats that are optimally suited to the special needs of premature babies and newborns. MAM Premies can be custom fitted to better adapt to the shape of the face and create more space for the use of breathing masks and other medical devices.



The Mam Premie comes in two sizes: Premie size 1 is for infants <1,000g, and Premie size 2 is for infants 900-1,500g.



MiniMuffs fit comfortably around the baby's ears with a soft design and hydrogel adhesive.

MiniMuffs neonatal noise attenuators protect sensitive ears

Designed specifically for premature babies, MiniMuffs neonatal noise attenuators reduce sound levels by at least 7dB and sound pressure levels by more than 50%. MiniMuffs can be used to provide a 'quiet hour' in the neonatal unit, under ventilation and during transfer inside and outside a hospital setting. MiniMuffs are available from Natus Medical Incorporated.

The Infant Supplier Guide provides a searchable database of equipment used for the care of sick and premature infants. Visit: www.infantjournal.co.uk/supplierguide.html