Using the BiliBed to Treat Jaundice

Congratulations on the birth of your baby. Some babies have a yellow color to their skin, called jaundice. Jaundice, which is caused by elevated bilirubin, can become dangerous and cause brain damage if the levels are too high. Your baby’s health care provider will monitor your baby’s bilirubin and treat as necessary.

How do we treat jaundice?
Your baby’s doctor has ordered phototherapy. This means the baby will be on a bed (called a BiliBed) with a special light that shines on the baby’s skin. Your baby may need phototherapy for 12 to 72 hours or more. It depends on the amount of bilirubin in baby’s blood. The more your baby is exposed to the special light, the quicker jaundice is treated and the faster baby can go home.

When your baby is treated with phototherapy, your baby will have blood drawn from the heel of the foot. This blood is tested for bilirubin levels. When the bilirubin level is back in the normal range, your baby will be able to come off the BiliBed.

Using the BiliBed
• Following the picture on the BiliBed, attach the green BiliCombi blanket to the bed. You must use this blanket; it keeps your baby safe and secure on the bed. It also will keep your baby warm. If this blanket becomes soiled, ask your nurse for a new one.
• If you feel your baby needs another blanket, feel free to put one on top of the BiliCombi. Please make sure you don’t block the fans on the side of the bed.
• When using the BiliBed correctly, there is no need to cover your baby’s eyes.
• Unzip the BiliCombi blanket. Put your baby on his or her back. Put baby’s arms into the sleeves of the BiliCombi blanket.
• Velcro the BiliCombi blanket to the BiliBed and under the baby’s chin.
• Do not tilt the bassinet while using the BiliBed.

What about feeding?
• It is important that your baby eat every 3 hours.
• Whether you are nursing or using a bottle, limit the time spent outside the BiliBed to about 15 minutes.
• Remember, the more time in the BiliBed, the sooner the jaundice is treated.

What about baby’s diapers?
• Loose, watery, green stools are very normal. This is your baby’s way of getting rid of the extra bilirubin in his or her blood.
• If your baby has not had a bowel movement in 8 hours, or less than 3 wet diapers in 24 hours, please let your nurse know.
• Turn off the light when changing baby’s diapers.
• Fold the diaper down to expose the most skin to the BiliBed light as possible.

What if my baby is fussy?
Some babies are very sleepy when their bilirubin is high. Be sure you are waking them every 3 hours to eat.

Some babies are fussy because they are in the BiliBed. Try to comfort them without picking them up.

Remember, the longer your baby has the light shining on his or her skin, the faster the bilirubin levels will go down.

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.