

Parent / carer advice sheet

Disinfection of infant feeding and sterilisation equipment on the neonatal unit (NNU)

Sterilising infant feeding equipment is important as it is vital in protecting your baby against infection that can cause vomiting and diarrhoea. This is important whether you are breast or bottle feeding your baby.

The method of decontamination in use on the neonatal unit is microwave steam sterilising using quick clean bags. You will be provided with a bag at the beginning of your NNU stay and you can use this bag 20 times.

Equipment that requires sterilising includes:

- bottles
- nipple shields
- feeding cups
- dummies
- breast pump attachments

Bottles and Feeding cups must be sterilised in between each use. Nipple shields, dummies and breast pumps can be washed with hot soapy water between uses but would benefit from being sterilised at least once in 24 hours.

Before sterilising, you need to:

- Clean bottles, teats and other feeding equipment in hot soapy water as soon as possible after feeds to avoid milk drying onto the equipment.
- Separate the equipment into its separate parts before washing.
- Wash in a washing up bowl and submerge the equipment in the hot soapy water when washing up.
- Use a clean bottle brush to clean equipment (only use this brush for cleaning the feeding equipment listed in this leaflet). If using teats some can be turned inside out to clean them, but this can cause damage so please follow the manufacturer's advice. Do not use salt to clean teats, as this can be dangerous for your baby.
- Rinse all your equipment in clean, cold running water to remove any soapy residue before sterilising.
- Place equipment in dry storage if not using straight away.

The advice above applies to all of your baby's feeding equipment, and whether you are feeding expressed breast milk or formula milk.

How to sterilise infant feeding equipment on the neonatal unit

Microwave steam sterilising:

The neonatal unit uses microwave steam decontamination. We will provide you with Medela reusable microwave steam bags while you are on the unit. Each bag can be used 20 times, it is important that a tick is placed in the 'mark after use' section.



- Clean the feeding equipment as described above.
- To sterilise the accessories, add 60mls of water to the microwave steam bag and add items to the bag (the nursing staff can advise).
- Seal the microwave steam bag
- Place in the centre of the turntable and microwave on high power for 3 minutes (800 – 1100w)
- When finished, use the heat protective gloves to carefully remove the bag from the microwave, holding the bag by the corner as the steam escaping from it will be very hot.
- Before removing the contents tilt the microwave steam bag over a sink to allow the excess hot water to drain through the steam vent/pour spout.
- Breast pump tubing does not need sterilising as it does not come into contact with the milk.
- **For safety reasons do not leave the microwave unattended whilst in use**

More information on sterilising infant feeding equipment can be found on the following websites

www.nhs.uk

www.unicef.org.uk

If you have any further questions regarding sterilisation please speak to the infant feeding team or nurse caring for your baby

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your nurse or healthcare professional.

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email bht.pals@nhs.net

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention and control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention and control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.