



# NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME PROTOCOL

The purpose of the Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) protocol is to safely and successfully wean babies from dependence on narcotics, opiates and other addictive substances.

## Program Goals

Our goal is to safely wean children from dependency while minimizing the signs and symptoms of withdrawal. The multidisciplinary inpatient team works together to:

- Prevent over-stimulation
- Create an optimal environment for development
- Maximize growth and weight gain by addressing any feeding difficulties
- Promote family bonding
- Provide family education
- Prepare the families for the transition home

## Program Description

The team treating a baby with NAS may consist of a Medical Provider, Nursing staff, Physical and Occupational Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologist and Registered Dietitian. Each patient is assigned a Social Worker and Case Manager at the time of admission. Providers from other disciplines, including Neurology, Pulmonology and Respiratory Therapy are available as needed. The team rounds daily with the nursing staff and monitors the overall health and progress of each infant. Together they determine the weaning schedule for NAS babies on a daily basis. There is an in-house Pediatrician covering the inpatient medical service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Nursing staff closely monitor the infant throughout the day and score the infant according to protocol every four hours. The nurses involve the family in care and provide education about infant care and development.

A Registered Dietitian follows each patient, tracking nutritional needs and weight gain and evaluating the need for alterations in caloric intake.

The role of the Social Worker is to provide support for the family and to assist in coordinating services. The Case Manager serves as liaison to the team and oversees the discharge process. There is also a Family Liaison who meets parents when they tour and upon admission to help ease the transition to the new environment. In addition, our Patient Advocate is available for parents who want to discuss any areas of concern regarding their child's care.

In many cases, an environment with low stimulation is appropriate for babies with NAS. Therapists may provide infant massage to decrease hypertonia. They may evaluate an infant's suck/swallow/breathe pattern to assess airway and feeding safety. They also provide education to family members and caregivers regarding massage, feeding, positioning and self-soothing techniques.



## Caregivers Matter, Too

Families find Franciscan Children's can offer a more comfortable, low-stimulation environment to babies with NAS. Caregivers are welcome to stay at the bedside 24 hours a day if they choose, and are encouraged to actively participate in their child's care.

## A Plan for Success

A discharge plan is devised by all the members of the team to ensure patients and families have the education and resources needed for a successful transition home and into the community.

## Contact Us

For more information contact Inpatient Admissions at Franciscan Children's at **617-254-3800 x2600**.



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At Franciscan Children's, we bring an unparalleled level of expertise to children with complex medical, mental health and educational needs so they can receive specialized care in a compassionate and positive environment. We share an unwavering commitment to excellence, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and live their best life.

