



Age-Specific Tips for Supporting Your Hospitalized Child *Infants (Birth-18 months)*

Infants are:

- Exploring and learning about their environment through their senses- touch, sight, hearing, taste, and smell.
- All about exploring new movements and developing motor skills.

Infants develop trust when their caregivers provide reliability, care, and affection. Feelings of mistrust can occur if care is inconsistent, unreliable, or nonexistent.

Toys to promote development:

Rattles
Mirrors
Teething rings
Keys on a ring
Light up toys
Musical toys
Textured toys
Stacking toys
Toys that show cause and effect
Textured and pop-up books
Push toys
Walkers and exersaucers

Common hospital stressors for infants:

Loss of daily routine
Lack of stimulation or overstimulation
Negative touch (pain)
Stranger anxiety
Limitations to eating
New environments

How to help your infant cope:

- Maintain a routine (sleeping and feeding schedules, etc.).
- Bring familiar, comforting items from home.
- Be present during potentially stressful or painful situations.
- Provide soothing words and comforting touch to your child.
- Provide stimulation to assist your child in continuing to explore his or her environment.
- Bring play into his or her hospital environment.

***Your infant can sense changes to your behavior caused by anxiety, stress or fear. Be sure to take personal time to care for yourself.**