

Having physiotherapy in the Children's Intensive Care Unit (CICU)

Paediatric Physiotherapy

Information for Patients and Carers

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Introduction

Some children who stay in the Children's Intensive Care Unit (CICU) will be seen by a physiotherapist as part of their treatment. Not all children will need physiotherapy treatment.

Physiotherapy can help with your child's breathing and help with their muscles and joints. Children of any age can be seen by a physiotherapist.

The nurses and doctors in the CICU work closely with the physiotherapy team every day. They will talk to the team if your child needs physiotherapy. This could change depending on your child's condition and the stage of their treatment. For example, some children need physiotherapy for 1 hour, twice a day, and sometimes they only need a short session twice a week.

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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Types of physiotherapy:

- **Respiratory (chest) physiotherapy**

Respiratory physiotherapy clears mucus (secretions) from your child's chest. This helps their lungs work better. This treatment can be carried out when your child is breathing on their own (including with oxygen) or if they are breathing with the help of a machine.

Physiotherapists can use different treatments with their hands to help clear mucus. These treatments include clapping on your child's chest (percussion) and vibration on your child's chest (expiratory vibrations). These treatments can be done with your child in different lying or sitting positions.

The physiotherapist may sometimes use a nebuliser (medicine in a mist/ steam). This helps to loosen thick or sticky mucus.

If your child is breathing with the help of a tube and machine (intubation and ventilation), a physiotherapist can give them deeper breaths using a bag of oxygen. When they are doing this the breathing machine (ventilator) may beep or alarm because of the interruption. This is nothing to worry about. The physiotherapist and nurse can remove mucus from your child's lungs (suction) using a small tube (catheter) inside your child's breathing tube.

Your child will usually cough when they are having this physiotherapy (unless their medicine is making them sleep very deeply). This is good for their chest.

Your child will need time to rest after physiotherapy.

If your child is awake and breathing on their own or with a mask, their chest physiotherapy may also include breathing or blowing exercises that they can do on their own, or with help from you or their nurse, when the physiotherapist is not there.

- **Physiotherapy for movement**

Moving is always good for your child's chest, muscles and joints. You should try to get your child to move or help them to move if this is safe.

If your child is well enough, activities involving movement are usually safe if your child is awake and breathing on their own or with a mask. Some activities can also be done even if your child is breathing with the help of a tube and a machine.

Activities like sitting up in bed, moving around in bed and getting out of bed, will help your child use their lungs better. It will also help stop their joints and muscles from getting stiff.

The physiotherapist may give your child exercises to do on their own, or with help from yourself or their nurse, when the physiotherapist is not there.

Your child's seat

Tell the physiotherapist or your child's nurse if they have a specialist seat or buggy that they normally use. You may be asked to bring this to the CICU to help your child get better.

If your child is a baby, the physiotherapist may ask you to bring in their bouncer seat from home.

Continuing treatment after your child leaves the CICU

If the physiotherapist feels that your child's physiotherapy needs to continue after leaving the CICU, then a physiotherapist will see them on the children's ward.

If your child has been having physiotherapy and is moved to another hospital, a CICU physiotherapist will contact the physiotherapy team at the other hospital to tell them about your child's treatment.

Contact details

If you have any questions about physiotherapy please talk to your child's physiotherapist, doctor or nurse, or contact the CICU on 0116 258 6302.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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