STAGE 3

Growing

At this stage, many babies put on weight steadily and need less help with breathing. Feeds increase, and babies start to hold their own temperature with less support — often moving from the humidicrib towards an open cot. The next aim is steady growth along their own curve.

Hurdles to stage 4

What usually comes next. Tick them off as they happen.

- [ ] Birth weight regained: your baby is back above the weight they were born at.
- [ ] Steady growth: your baby is gaining weight consistently along their own growth curve.
- [ ] Towards an open cot: your baby is holding their temperature with less added warmth.

Milestones at stage 3

- [ ] My baby has regained their birth weight and is gaining steadily.
- [ ] My baby is breathing independently or with minimal oxygen support.
- [ ] Regular visits from specialists, such as neonatologists, are part of my baby's care.
- [ ] My baby has had any imaging or transfusions they needed to support their health.
- [ ] My baby's caffeine therapy has been reduced or stopped as they stabilise.
- [ ] I have noticed my baby growing and getting stronger.

A note for you

Progress is not always a straight line. Many babies move back a stage for a while — that is a common part of NICU time, not a step backwards for you.

Your reflections

Something I learned this week:

General information and personal tracking only, not medical advice. This guide brings together publicly available guidance from health organisations and published research. It has not been reviewed by a clinician and is not tailored to your baby. Your care team knows your baby best. In an emergency, call emergency services immediately.

Support I would like right now:

One small thing I did for myself:

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