

NeoBellyBand for Parents

What is a NeoBellyBand?

A NeoBellyBand is a soft, flexible piece of fabric, lined with foam that is worn around a baby's abdomen (belly) to support a baby's belly muscles.



Why do a baby's belly muscles need support?

- Babies in the NICU often need help breathing. Positive air pressure helps the lungs stay full when a baby is born prematurely. This may be given by machines called CPAP or NIPPV. While going into the lungs, this air can also be swallowed or flow into the stomach and intestines. This is called gaseous abdominal distension or "CPAP Belly". When this happens your baby's belly looks distended (bloated).
- Having abdominal distension for a long time can cause the belly muscles in the abdomen to stretch out. These muscles are needed to support us when we breathe, pass gas, stool, and move our bodies. A belly band adds support to the muscles of the abdomen to improve these body functions for your baby.
- Your baby also may benefit from a belly band for other causes of decreased abdominal wall function.

How is the belly band worn?

Neonatal therapists will measure your baby and cut the band to fit your baby's abdomen. If your baby outgrows it, they will be fit for a new one.

- The band will be placed around the belly and held in place with Velcro. It will be snug but not tight.
- It should be removed for bathing.
- To check and protect your baby's skin, we will open it at every diaper change and minimize placing leads and wires from leads under the band.
- When it is dirty, it can be hand washed, air dried and reshaped to minimize shrinking during drying. If it gets too dirty for hand washing, a new one will be made.

How long does my baby wear the belly band?

- Once your baby no longer needs CPAP or NIPPV, the wearing time will be decreased to half of the time.
- Discontinuing wear will be individualized for your baby. We will continue to monitor your baby's abdomen and may remove it when their belly is in typical size and shape. Some babies benefit from using it longer to aid in stooling.

*Parents are an important part of their baby's care team.
Please share any thoughts or concerns with us.*

