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**Communication in the NICU**

The NICU is stressful and confusing for families with little or no experience dealing with a baby with special needs. It is difficult for many families to communicate effectively with the medical team due to emotional, physical, financial, and family stressors co-occurring. However, effective communication with the medical care team and the family is critical for understanding the needs of the baby and the family. When there is a lack of communication, a NICU stay's stress and anxiety increase.

Some strategies that other parents have found helpful are:

* Find out when the doctors round so you can be a part of the conversation
* Try to schedule phone calls with providers if you are not able to be there
* Keep a notebook for writing questions and keeping track of answers
* Speaking with the hospital Chaplin for spiritual support
* Speaking with the social worker about the needs of your family
* Ask for things in writing or video
* Finding a source of emotional support outside the hospital