

How to use your Heart-to-Heart



We know that not being able to hold your baby can be difficult. The Heart-to-Heart is our little gift to help you bond with your baby through your journey with us in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Nepean Hospital.

In this pack you will find 3 fabric hearts.

- One fabric heart is for you to place on your chest. Your scent is absorbed from your skin to the heart.
- The second heart is to place in the crib with your baby. The scent from your baby's skin is absorbed to the heart.

The two hearts are then swapped so when you and your baby are separated, your familiar scent is always with your baby and the scent of your baby is always with you.

- The third heart is to keep as a spare.

How to use your Heart-to-Heart

- Take one heart and keep it tucked against your body or inside your bra to absorb your scent. We suggest leaving your heart placed overnight.

Please avoid contact with breast milk. The hearts are not designed to be used as breast pads.

- Before you leave to go home, place the heart which you had kept against your body, in the crib with your baby.
- Your nurse can help you in placing the heart under your baby's head.
- When you leave to go home, make sure you let your nurse know that you have left a heart with your baby so that it is not removed.
- Refresh the heart each time you visit.

These special fabric hearts have been made with love and care by volunteers from our community, using only the softest cotton or flannelette material.

Taking care of your Heart-to-Heart

- Before first use, machine wash on a gentle cycle or hand wash your hearts in scent-free laundry detergent. Do not use fabric softener.
- Allow the hearts to dry completely before using.
- Hearts can be washed each day. Just remember to replace with a scented heart.
- Do not wear strong perfume or deodorant while you have your heart tucked against your body.
- If you smoke, please speak to your nurse about additional care of your hearts.

When to use your Heart-to-Heart

The Heart-to-Heart program is designed to help you bond with your baby through your NICU journey.

Hearts are only for use with babies who are in an incubator, or open cots and while on monitoring.

Although we encourage you to keep your hearts as a memory of your time in NICU, **do not** continue to use them once you and your baby are home.

For more information on how to use or care for your Heart-to-Heart, please speak to your baby's nurse.



**Nepean Blue Mountains
Local Health District**

PO Box 63
Penrith NSW 2751
Telephone: (02) 4734 2000
Fax: (02) 4734 3737
Email: NBMLHD-mail@health.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.nbmlhd.health.nsw.gov.au
Facebook: www.facebook.com/NBMLHD
Instagram: [instagram.com/nepeanbluemountains](https://www.instagram.com/nepeanbluemountains)
Twitter: @NBMLHD
YouTube: Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District