

# Caring for the infant with Jaundice

*What you need to know about the therapy*

*Jaundice* is a yellowish color some baby's skin develops because the amount of *bilirubin* in the blood is too high. Jaundice is treated with phototherapy, which is simply treatment with light. The special light used causes the bilirubin to break down and to be excreted by the baby more easily. Your baby will most likely have daily blood tests to determine if the bilirubin levels have decreased, and these tests will help your baby's doctor decide when the phototherapy treatment is no longer needed.

## **A Kidz Kare at Home Representative will show you how to set up the unit:**

1. You will want to place the unit in a draft-free area. The unit should always be placed below the baby.
2. Plug the power cord into an electrical outlet, using a three-pronged adapter if needed.
3. It is best to dress the baby in a diaper and t-shirt or one-piece outfit.
4. Place a cover over the panel, change the cover if it becomes soiled or wet.
5. Place the panel upon the baby's back with the light side next to the skin. As much of the panel should be covering the skin as possible. It should extend from neck to diaper. You may need to roll the diaper down slightly if there is excessive panel not in use.
6. Avoid using lotions or creams on the baby's skin; this can reduce the benefits of the therapy
7. The representative will set the light intensity on the unit. Do not change the intensity level.
8. Turn the power switch to the ON position. The bulbs should light up, and should not be flickering.
9. Use the phototherapy unit for the number of hours recommended by your physician – which is usually continuously EXCEPT for feeding, bathing, changing or cuddling your baby.
10. Turn the power switch to the OFF position when not in use.
11. Complete the daily record log.

### ***Daily Log Record***

You must keep a daily record of your baby's temperature, feedings, and wet/soiled diapers. The following instructions will help you complete the Daily Log

1. Time: Record the time of day
2. Temperature: Rectal or armpit  
Monitor the baby's temperature every 4 hours and record on the log sheet. Write "A" for armpit or "R" for Rectal. If the temperature is below 97° F. or above 100° F. on one reading, retake the temperature in 15 minutes. Attempt to warm or cool the baby as appropriate, and retake the temperature in 15 minutes. If there is no change, call your physician or nurse.
3. Keep the room temperature around 72° F.
4. Formula Amount or breast feeding:
  - a. Write amount and time of each feeding. If breast-fed, record length of time that baby nursed, and whether feeding was good, fair or poor.
  - b. Offer feedings as often as suggested by physician. Call the doctor if the baby feeds poorly over a six-hour period.
5. Water amount: Record the amount of water intake.
6. Wet diapers: Record wet diapers by using an "X" in the appropriated box.
7. Stool color/amount:
  - a. Record the amount and time of each stool (bowel movement). Black, sticky stool is normal for the first few days. Green to yellowish stool will normally follow.
8. Other: Record any other pertinent information.

### ***Cleaning the Unit***

1. Disconnect the power cord and wipe the cabinet with a damp cloth as needed. DO NOT immerse any part of the unit in liquid. DO NOT use abrasive cleaners.

### ***Important Safety Reminders***

1. Do not use the unit while bathing the baby.
2. Avoid lotions or creams on the baby's skin. This can reduce the benefits of the therapy.
3. Check the baby's diaper frequently for wetness. Unchanged wet diapers can cause skin irritation.
4. DO NOT plug multiple devices into a single outlet. Avoid use of extension cords.
5. Do not look or allow other children or pets to look directly at the lights.
6. Please call a *Kidz Kare at Home* Representative if you have problems with your equipment.