

# Prechtl's General Movements Assessment

## Information for parents

This information sheet explains an early developmental assessment for your baby. It includes the risks, the benefits and any alternatives. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the team caring for your child.

### What is the Prechtl's General Movements Assessment?

It is a non-invasive standardised assessment which involves taking a video of your baby lying on their back while they are awake, alert and calm. The video allows us to assess their **General Movements** to identify if they are at a higher risk of having difficulties with movements as they grow, such as cerebral palsy or other developmental conditions.

### What are General Movements?

These are distinct movements that your baby makes naturally from before birth until they are 20 weeks corrected age (their age from your due date rather than the day they were born). Whether or not they make these movements at different ages allows us to understand how well your baby's central nervous system is developing and can help us to predict if they may have later difficulties.

Corrected age	Movements
Birth – 6 to 9 weeks	'Writhing' phase
6 – 20 weeks	'Fidgety' phase

### How is the assessment done?

Our therapists will take a video of your baby when they are awake and alert and lying on their back, usually in their nappy or a short-sleeved vest. They will record your baby's movements for up to five minutes. These results will then be assessed by a team of experts who specialise in infant development.

## **When will my baby have the assessment?**

Our therapists will aim to take at least one video of your baby while they are still on the Neonatal Unit and then another when they are 12 – 16 weeks corrected age. We may also ask you to take a video at home – please see page three.

## **Why should my baby have this assessment?**

We would like to do this assessment for any baby who is at risk of neurodevelopmental difficulties. This may include babies who:

- are born prematurely (at less than 30 weeks)
- have a birth weight of less than 1.5kg
- have hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy (HIE) because their brain did not receive enough oxygen and/or blood flow around the time of birth
- have had a neurological examination that is not as expected (atypical).

## **What are the risks?**

This is a non-invasive assessment which involves no risk to your child.

## **What are the benefits?**

By having this quick, cost-effective, non-invasive assessment, our team can:

- decide whether your baby will benefit from early intervention
- advise you on how you can support your baby's development
- help to provide a potentially better outcome for your baby and for you.

## **Are there any alternatives?**

This assessment is often used alongside other physical examinations, but this is the best way to assess how your baby's central nervous system is developing so we can give them early treatment and other care and support if they need it.

## **How you can help us with this assessment**

Our therapists will try to do your baby's first video assessment in the Neonatal Unit. But if your baby has been discharged from hospital we may ask you to take a video assessment of them yourself and send it to us using a secure portal.

## **When should I take the video?**

Normally around term age and then between 12-16 weeks corrected age (but parents will be guided by the therapist prior to discharge).

## **How do I take a video assessment of my baby?**

It is very important that you follow these steps:

- Place your baby on a neutral-coloured soft floor. Lay them on a plain towel or blanket if you do not have a neutral-coloured surface.
- Ensure they are wearing only a nappy, or a short-sleeved vest if they are unhappy when undressed.
- Take the video when your baby is quiet but alert and not crying.
- Take it from directly above them, ensuring their whole body and limbs are in view for about **three minutes**.
- Do not talk to them and do not make any sounds because this may affect their General Movements.
- Make sure your baby has no toys and there are no distractions such as hanging mobiles.

## **How do I send the video to you?**

Send it securely via WhatsApp to the Neonatal Therapy phone.

Tel: **07815 480 647**

We let you know that we have received it.

## **What do you do with the video?**

When we receive your video, we will transfer it securely via nhs.net and OneDrive. It will also be stored on a secure departmental drive.

We will view the video on a large screen in our multidisciplinary meeting of experts who specialise in infant development.

## **When will I get the results?**

We usually get the results within one month of the second video being taken and assessed. We will phone you to discuss them with our team. If your baby's General Movements highlight any concerns, the multidisciplinary team will guide you further through investigations, assessments and early intervention to help the management of your baby. If we have any concerns about your baby's General Movements after this assessment, we will explain other investigations, assessments and early interventions, that can help support your baby's development.

## **Who can I contact with queries or concerns?**

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the physiotherapist on the Neonatal Unit or you can contact us on **07815 480 647**.

## Consent

We must by law obtain your written consent to your baby having this assessment. If you are unsure about any aspect of the assessment, please do not hesitate to ask to speak with a senior member of staff again.

The consent form also asks if you consent to the video being:

- shared with other professionals to get their advice
- used for teaching other staff and students about general movements
- shared (anonymously) in meetings with other Trusts.

If you do not want the video to be shared with other Trusts, or teachings with professionals learning about neonatal development, do not tick this box on the consent form, or let us know when you send us your video.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. The PALS office is on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: **020 3299 3601** Email: **kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net**

You can also contact us by using our online form at **[www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on **020 3299 1844**.

**[www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk)**