

Noise levels in Special Care Nursery

Protecting the neurodevelopment of our littlest patients



Protecting developing brains

We look after babies that are born after 32 weeks gestation. This is such a critical time for brain development and growth for babies born prematurely.

We are focusing on reducing the noise level in our special care nursery. The sound ear provides a visual cue to noise levels in decibels (DB).



Green = safe levels <45 DB

Amber = approaching unsafe levels 51-70 DB

Red = unsafe levels >70 DB (when ongoing for extended periods)

The sound ear does not record conversation, only the decibels.

Negative impact of noise

Hearing Development

Newborns are particularly sensitive to sound, and exposure to loud noises can potentially affect the development of their auditory system.

Stress Response

Loud or sudden noises can trigger stress responses in newborns.

Sleep Disruption

Newborns need significant amounts of sleep for growth and development.

Feeding and Growth

Noise can interfere with feeding behaviours.

Neurodevelopment

Chronic exposure to high levels of noise may have implications for neurodevelopment.

Parental Interaction

High noise levels can affect the interactions between parents and their newborns.

How we can keep noise levels down

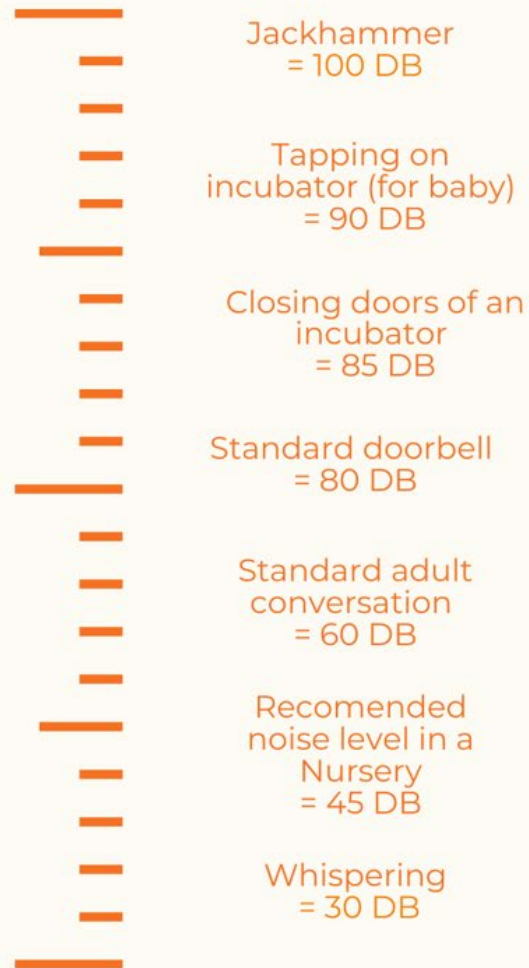
The American Academy of Paediatrics recommends a Neonatal Unit does not exceed 45 DB.

Things we can all do:

- Turning mobile phones onto silent
- Using headphones if wanting to listen to music during cuddles
- Being mindful of monitor alarms
- Closing doors (incubators, cupboards) quietly
- Keeping conversations to a low volume



Decibel levels of...



Help us make a difference. We are working with CSU to navigate ways to improve noise levels in the special care nursery.



Survey link

References

<https://www.safercare.vic.gov.au/best-practice-improvement/clinical-guidance/neonatal/developmental-care-for-neonates>

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