



It's a Fact: Preemies Get **Re-Hospitalized**

Dräger

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About the author:

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She also runs the free Inspire Premie Community, 40,000+ strong at <http://premie.inspire.com>

It's a Fact: Premies Get Re-Hospitalized

I admit it, I was a total freak when it came time for my daughter to come home. I was happy but I was also terrified and incredibly nervous. I did not feel ready for my daughter to come home. But home she came and we started quickly settling into a routine of feedings and naps and sleep and more, cocooning ourselves from the outside world and attempting to normalize our lives. It lasted a total of 5 days and by that time we were a mess. We were stressed, Becky had feedings coming up, alarms going off on the monitor and had started sleeping endlessly. I honestly thought I was losing my mind.

After a series of calls, we ended up calling her pulmonologist (lung doctor) who had been managing her oxygen orders and her reflux medications. It was Friday afternoon by the time I called them and they got us in within the hour. We rushed to the appointment. The doctor told us our daughter had dropped in weight and was obviously struggling. We felt like total failures as he laid out the options. Change reflux meds and do outpatient tests or put her in the hospital so they could do everything there and observe her while we got some much needed sleep. He empathized with our situation and told us he knew this from a parent perspective himself as he left the room so we could make a decision. Thankfully we had my mother-in-law there because as I was waffling about what to do and shaming myself internally for being a royal failure as a parent, she said bluntly, "She needs to go into the hospital." She was right.



My daughter ended up spending two days in the hospital. She came home on a new feeding regimen, a new medication, an additive to her feeding schedule and full-time oxygen as opposed to only with feedings. While we were still tired and stressed, having the team take over for a couple of days was helpful and it got us back on track toward a smoother homecoming.

Reality is, hospitalization happens in this community, period. So prepare for it rather than have it come at you full blast and be completely unready.

Some tips:

- Diaper bag as emergency baby luggage. And you thought the diaper bag was just for diapers, wipes and diaper rash cream and feeding items, right? Nope, you should also keep a couple of outfits in there along with extra pacifiers, a couple of toys, a baby book.
- Diaper bag as your luggage, too. Tuck at least one set of your underwear in the bag and also include a toothbrush and travel sized toothpaste and deodorant.
- Medication list. Having a list of medications is key. Make sure the one you have in the diaper bag is reviewed monthly. This will save a lot of time should you end up with paramedics at the house or working with a triage person at the emergency room.
- NICU discharge paperwork. Despite having electronic medical records these days, having a copy of the medical discharge paperwork is important. You may need to travel out of the area to a specialist appointment and then end up at hospital that is not connected to your NICU or any other myriad of reasons. Have the paperwork handy and you will save a lot of time. You will be surprised at how handy this paperwork comes in over the next few years.

For more information visit www.babyfirst.com

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