



## **Special Care Baby Unit and Maternity**

# **Heart Murmurs in the Newborn** **Information for Parents**

### **What is a heart murmur?**

A heart murmur is an extra noise which is heard when the heart is listened to with a stethoscope.

### **Does a heart murmur mean there is a heart problem?**

Not necessarily. A heart murmur can sometimes be a sign that there is a problem with the heart, like a small hole or a narrowing. However, many babies with heart murmurs have completely normal hearts. (These babies have what are known as “innocent” heart murmurs.)

### **How will I know if my baby has a heart problem?**

Your baby will be reviewed on Kingfisher ward within two weeks. If the murmur can still be heard your baby will be referred to a heart specialist who may do further tests.

### **What should I look out for?**

Most babies with heart murmurs remain well but, if your baby becomes unwell, they should be seen urgently by a doctor. Things to look out for include:

- breathing difficulties
- breathlessness or sweating when feeding
- poor feeding
- blue colour of skin or lips, or mottled skin

### **What should I do if my baby becomes unwell?**

You should seek medical advice. Phone your GP or out of hours service. If your baby seems seriously unwell ring 999. Explain that your baby has a heart murmur and has become unwell.

## Points to remember:-

A heart murmur is an extra noise heard when listening with a stethoscope.

Many babies with heart murmurs have completely normal hearts.

A heart murmur can sometimes be a sign of an underlying heart problem.

**IF YOUR BABY BECOMES UNWELL SEEK URGENT MEDICAL ADVICE**

## About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email [pals@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@dchft.nhs.uk)



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