

THE ULTIMATE NICU MUM & BABY BAG LIST

This is a bit more comprehensive than the usual checklists for your hospital bag. If you're on bed rest, facing a long NICU stay or having to transfer to a hospital away from your home town, there are a few extras you might want to pack for making your days slightly less boring and little more comfortable!

Not everything on this list is an essential item, and depending on how long you'll be away from home you might need to add more of some things to get you through.

TOILETRY BAG:

- Toothbrush and Toothpaste, a small bottle of Mouthwash is helpful for bed rest
- Hair Brush/Comb and several Hair Ties
- Shampoo and Conditioner, or Dry Shampoo for bed rest
- Body Wash
- Deodorant - try to use one that isn't highly fragranced because baby needs to be able to recognise your unique scent
- Face or gentle Body Wipes - an essential for feeling refreshed if you're not allowed up for a shower!
- Your usual makeup
- Face Cream
- Hand Cream - using the sanitiser in NICU will dry your hands out in no time
- Zoono* - hand sanitiser which is gentle on sensitive skin. With one application lasting up to 24 hours, Zoono is a good alternative if you react to the hospital brand
- Lip Balm
- Nipple Cream - if baby is late prem or full term and able to breastfeed (not usually required if you're expressing)
- Breast Pads - a small box of disposables or at least several pairs of washable pads
- Maternity Pads - basic pads are supplied but having a pack of your own can be useful
- Flushable Wipes - much more gentle for after labour
- Any medications or supplements you usually take
- Glasses, or contacts and solution if you wear them



CLOTHING:

- 2-3 sets of sleepwear
- Lightweight robe or dressing gown, for expressing during the night and taking the milk down to NICU
- 6+ pairs of comfortable underwear. High-waisted or full briefs are ideal in case of a C-section (and for keeping those surfboard maternity pads in place!), look for cheap 3/5 packs from KMart, The Warehouse etc
- 2-3 Nursing Bras
- 3-4 Breastfeeding/front opening/loose fitting tops for easy expressing. Clothes that have a front opening can usually be worn for Kangaroo Cuddles (skin to skin) with your baby instead of changing into a hospital gown
- A lightweight cardigan or jumper with a zip for in the maternity ward (the Neonatal Unit is kept really warm at all times)
- 3-4 skirts, comfy pants or leggings
- 2-3 pairs of socks
- Slip on shoes, Jandals, and/or Slippers
- A Laundry or plastic bag, for your washing to be taken back home in

BITS & PIECES:

- Mobile Phone (don't forget the charger!), an extension lead can be really helpful too
- Your own Pillow
- A book, Kindle or ebooks, laptop or tablet
- Headphones or earbuds
- Notebook and pen - always useful for general notes, lists, questions you need to ask your medical team, or recording your expressing times/volumes
- Something small to keep you occupied while on bed rest or for quiet time in the NICU - colouring books or even crafty things like crochet or knitting!
- My NICU Journey or another premature baby book* - to record the details of your baby's stay in the unit

FOOD & DRINK:

- Plenty of snacks. Hospital food isn't amazing so pack your favourite fresh or dried fruit, muesli bars, nuts and seeds, crackers, biscuits, lollies, chocolate, etc. Once baby is born you'll need to keep up your energy intake to help with milk supply
- Water Bottle
- Reusable Coffee Cup
- Your favourite Tea, Coffee or Hot Chocolate Sachets

FOR BABY:

In NICU all the necessities are provided until baby is discharged. Babies that can maintain their temperature can usually be dressed - choose from anything your unit has available, or you're welcome to bring in your own clothes.

- Prem sized clothes* - look for 100% natural fabrics to avoid baby overheating, and NICU friendly styles which allow for easy dressing around their monitor leads and oxygen
- Swaddles - soft Muslin or 100% Cotton
- Cuski Miniboo* - a tiny comforter which holds mum's scent, giving your baby reassurance even when separated from mum and dad
- Octoprem* - the tentacles give your baby something to hold onto (mimicking the feel of the umbilical cord), and helps to prevent baby from pulling on their tubes and monitor leads. Octoprem is tested to the Australia/NZ Toy Safety Standard
- A small soft toy for size comparison photos
- Premature Milestone Cards* - to visually capture those important moments in the first weeks and months of your baby's life
- A small, labelled bag to leave at baby's bedside for laundry - if you're bringing in your baby's clothes or swaddles the nurses will put aside anything that needs a wash
- A favourite baby book to read out loud - hearing your voice can reduce stress and even helps with baby's brain development!

* Items available from www.smallbabies.co.nz

