



Preventing Infant Abduction: A parent's guide

A new family has many things on their mind: the excitement of birth, learning to care for their newborn, and thoughts about how to keep their baby safe.

Throughout your stay at The Ottawa Hospital, the team will work to keep your baby safe. It is important for families to learn about security procedures and what can be done to prevent infant abduction.

What is infant abduction?

Infant abduction occurs when a baby is taken without the parents' consent. Abduction from a birthing facility is a rare event, which creates an immediate crisis for all concerned.

How will my baby and family be protected?

The Birthing Unit, Mother-Baby Unit, Special Care Nursery and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit all have specific policies and procedures to ensure safety of your baby. At birth, 2 identification bracelets will be placed on your baby. You and your identified support person/partner will also receive a bracelet with the same number and information printed on it. Another bracelet will be placed on your baby in the Mother-Baby Unit. It will be equipped with an alarm that will notify security if your baby is out of the permitted zone. If you and your baby are separated, the bracelets should be checked when you are reunited. We want you to feel safe at all times.

Who is allowed to care for my baby?

Only certain staff members are allowed to care for your baby. You have the right to, and should ask to see the hospital photo identification badge (ID) of your health care providers. Always check the photo ID before allowing anyone to provide care for your baby. *Your nurse will introduce herself to you when you first meet*, so that you know her name.

Any time your baby must leave your room for tests or procedures, you or your support person/partner may accompany the baby.

You are permitted to walk around on the Mother Baby Unit with your baby but we ask that you not leave your unit. *Please do not be offended* if you are asked to show your ID bracelets; this is to protect you and your baby.

You should never leave your baby unsupervised. Be curious with people entering your room or those inquiring about your baby, even if they wear hospital uniforms. Notify hospital staff immediately if you are concerned.

What to do once at home with my baby?

Start an information file on your baby. It should include a colour photograph (head and shoulders), footprints, as well as a complete written description of your baby. Be sure to note birthmarks and visible marks such as moles, etc. Update these files every three months for the first two years.

For more information see www.childfindontario.ca