



# Heart murmurs in the newborn

## Information for parents and carers

### **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 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” or “normal” heart murmurs.)

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

We will aim to offer a scan “Echo” before or soon after discharge. We will then discuss the findings and tell you the follow up plan following this. Your baby may 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. Signs to look out for include breathing difficulties, becoming breathless or sweaty when feeding, poor feeding, blue colour of skin and lips, or mottled skin.

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

You should seek urgent medical advice. Phone NHS 24 (111) or your GP. Explain that your baby has a heart murmur and has become unwell. If you are very worried please take your child to the nearest Accident and Emergency department.

### **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.**