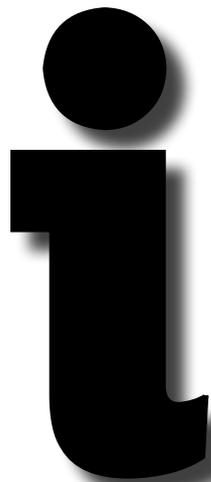


## ***Prolonged Jaundice screen*** (page 1 of 2)



### **What is Jaundice?**

Jaundice is the medical term for the yellow appearance of the skin and whites of the eyes.

### **Why is my baby jaundiced?**

Jaundice is very common. Up to 90% of babies will have some jaundice in the first few days after birth. Most jaundice is harmless and will go away on its own without treatment.

It is caused by the breakdown of red blood cells faster than the liver can manage. The waste product of this breakdown is called bilirubin. This is stored in the skin and whites of the eyes until it can be removed from the body in the stool ('poo') and urine. This is a normal process.

### **Will the jaundice go away?**

Most jaundice will disappear within 14 days. Sometimes it can take a little longer.

### **Why do we do a prolonged jaundice screen?**

We assess babies who are still jaundiced at around 2 weeks of age, or 3 weeks if they were born prematurely. This is to see if your baby is healthy and if there is any other reason making it remain jaundiced such as:

- infections or other illnesses
- blood disorders - meaning that the blood is broken down more quickly than usual
- an underactive thyroid gland – this has usually already been tested on the “heel prick” test (also known as the Guthrie Test) which is done at 5-8 days of age
- liver problems – these are rare but important.

Most babies do not have any problems at all and need no further tests or treatment. Sometimes the jaundice may continue in babies who are completely well and are being breast fed. There is no reason to stop breast feeding if this is the case with your baby.

### **What is involved in the prolonged jaundice screen?**

Your baby will be undressed and weighed to make sure that it is gaining

**Children's Unit**  
**01722 336262 ext 2560**

If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: [customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk)

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

weight since birth. The doctors will take details about your baby and the jaundice. Your baby will be examined all over. The stool ("poo") colour will need to be seen by the doctor, so it is a good idea to bring a dirty nappy with you. A blood test will be done to assess the jaundice level and type of jaundice. Your baby may be given sugar syrup as pain relief during blood testing. We will show you how to catch a urine sample from your baby. This will be sent to the lab to test for a urine infection.

## **What happens next?**

After two days you will be telephoned with the results. Most babies will not need any other tests or appointments. Occasionally we may ask you to come back for further testing.

If you have not received your results after four days please telephone the hospital main switchboard on 01722 336262 and ask to be put through to the paediatric day assessment unit.