

What is sucrose and why do we use it?

procedures. Sucrose is now widely used across the world for short-term pain relief in babies.

Research shows that just a small amount of sucrose can reduce the amount of pain experienced by babies.

Is using sucrose safe?

At present, research shows that sucrose is a safe and effective method of pain relief. Administering sucrose does not affect feeding as the amount given is so small.

Can breast milk be used as pain relief?

Breast milk is sweet too, but some studies have shown it is not as effective as sucrose. However, if you prefer breast milk to be used instead of sucrose, please speak to a member of staff. If your baby is well enough to feed, then you may be able to put him/her to the breast during the procedure if this is practical.

What are the benefits of using a pacifier/dummy?

Babies use dummies for non-nutritive sucking and comfort. Non-nutritive sucking is when a baby sucks without getting any milk. During a procedure, a dummy can be used to provide comfort and reduce pain.

Are there any problems associated with using dummies?

Problems linked with using dummies whilst in SCBU:

Difficulty in establishing breastfeeding. Sucking on a dummy is different from sucking at the breast and it is felt that the baby may get confused.

Research has not shown any short-term problems caused by premature or sick babies using a dummy. However, due to the differences between sucking a dummy and suckling at the breast, as soon as your baby is able to take more feeds at the breast, then the use of the pacifier should be limited so that your baby has lots of chance to practice and increase your milk supply. For this reason, we will only use the dummy during painful procedures, unless you state otherwise.

Problems associated with the habitual use of dummies when you go home:

Early weaning from the breast

Increased incidence of ear infections

How do I recognise when my baby is in pain?

What if my baby has longer-lasting pain?

If your baby has ongoing pain, paracetamol or something stronger may be prescribed by the doctors.

Can I refuse pain relief for my baby?

If you do not wish your baby to have pain relief, or have any questions, please feel free to discuss it with a member of the Special Care team.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016). Prevention and Management of Procedural Pain in the Neonate. [Online] Available at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2016/01/22/peds.2015-4271> [Accessed 27/07/2017].

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