



Health education Number : PED-107

Set date: 2017.06.07

Revised date: 2022.06.24

Review date: 2020.09.14

## Neonatal Jaundice



**To deliver intelligent and holistic medicine and to provide the best healthcare  
Compassion, Quality, Innovation Accountability**

**All information above has been reviewed by Pediatric specialists  
Edited and published by the Department of Nursing,  
Taichung Veterans General Hospital**



## What is the neonatal jaundice?

The product of metabolism of red blood cells in human blood, one of which is called “bilirubin,” which is finally excreted through the liver. Newborn red blood cells are more common than adults (thus, more red blood cell metabolites are produced), and the liver is less mature (thus, bilirubin is not easily excreted). Therefore, bilirubin will accumulate in the body, causing yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes. It knowns as the “Neonatal Jaundice”.

## How neonatal jaundice distinguishes between physiological and pathological

Physiological jaundice	Pathological jaundice
It occurs in 2-3 days after birth, reaches the peak at the 4-5 day and restored to normal range in 7-10 days. The bilirubin excretion can be promoted by feeding enough breast milk to subside naturally or by light therapy to reduce jaundice.	It usually occurs within 24 hours after birth, and may last for more than two weeks. In severe cases, it may even cause bilirubin to pass through the cerebrovascular barrier and cause brain damage. The causes include incompatibility between mother and child blood type, broad bean disease, biliary atresia, infection, etc.

## When to seek medical immediately

If you find that the back of baby's palms and feet become as yellow



as his face, weakness, drowsiness, sucking weakness, vomiting, not to drinking milk. In more serious situations, baby will hard to pacify, sharp cry, stiff limbs, and seizure. Seek medical advice as soon as possible and have a doctor perform a detailed examination. After hospitalization, it is usually need to receive phototherapy, and a few of babies with severe jaundice need blood exchange therapy.

## Home care

1. Have your baby drink enough milk (pre- dominantly breast milk recommended). After three days of birth, have at least six to eight wet and light-yellow urine diapers a day.
2. Whether it is breast-feeding or feeding formula milk, because the milk itself contains water, so there is no need to feed water. In addition, other diets are not recommended for babies.
3. Observe baby's jaundice in a well-lit place. If you find the back of baby's palms and feet become as yellow as his face, drowsiness, vomiting, gray stools (fig. 1), fever, etc., seek medical immediately.
4. Exposure of the baby to sunlight or general fluorescent lighting does not improve jaundice, and if you do not protect your baby's eyes, you may cause eye injury.

## Conclusion

Neonatal jaundice is a common phenomenon and many parents are concerned. After returning home, close observation of the baby's jaundice will help early detection and medical treatment to prevent the occurrence of complications.





Figure 1. Stool identification card





## References

- Huang, J.W., & Lin, Y.H. (2019). Nursing of high-risk neonates. Chen, Y. Z. Lueckenotte (Ed.), *Practical Pediatric Nursing* (8th ed., pp. 147-159). Taipei City: Hua Xing.
- Wang Xinhua(2021). The baby is yellow, the new breast feeding panic- Recognize neonatal jaundice. *Chi Mei Medical Information* , (132) , 21-22 .



## **Let's take the quiz to make sure you understand**

- 1. Physiological jaundice usually begins two to three days after birth and slowly subsides between seven and ten days after birth.**  
  
☐Yes ☐No ☐Unknow
- 2. Pathological jaundice usually appears within 24 hours after birth, and may be caused by blood type incompatibility between mother and child, favismosis, etc.**  
  
☐Yes ☐No ☐Unknow
- 3. If you find that your baby's stool is white and light, it doesn't matter, because it is the color of formula milk or breast milk.**  
  
☐Yes ☐No ☐Unknow
- 4. If your baby is exposed to the sun or a normal fluorescent lamp, jaundice will not improve and he must seek medical attention.**  
  
☐Yes ☐No ☐Unknow
- 5. Symptoms of severe jaundice in babies include weakness, sleepiness, weakened sucking ability, vomiting, and refusal**



to drink milk. They should seek medical attention as soon as possible.

☐Yes ☐No ☐Unknow