

Heart Murmur in Infants

Information for Parents and Carers



What is a heart murmur?

All babies have their heart examined as part of the new-born routine examination. This is done to pick up problems at an early stage. During this examination, your baby has been found to have a heart murmur.

A heart murmur is an extra or unusual noise made by blood as it passes through the heart. A stethoscope is placed against the baby's chest to hear a heart murmur. In some babies it may not be there all the time – it may come and go. Some heart murmurs are normal (called innocent murmurs) and are often heard in newborn babies. Others may be the first sign that there is a problem with the heart structure.



What does it mean for my baby?

When a heart murmur is heard, the doctor will examine your baby to ensure that there are no other problems. You can then take your baby home. Your baby will be referred to Cardiology to arrange an outpatient appointment for you to return to hospital for further review. During the outpatient appointment your baby will be reviewed by a Cardiologist or Paediatrician with Expertise in Cardiology. It is common for a heart tracing (ECG) to be carried out, and sometimes a heart scan (Echocardiogram). Both procedures are painless and carried out by expert staff.

What are the things I should look out for when I take my baby home?

Signs to look out for include:

- Looks pale or blue
- Has difficulty with his or her breathing
- Is finding it difficult to feed or is breathless or sweaty during feeds
- You have other concerns about your baby's health

If your baby has any of the above concerning symptoms, you should make an appointment with your GP. But if you are very worried about your baby, you can call NHS 24 on 111 or take them to the Paediatric Accident and Emergency Department:

50 Little France Crescent
Edinburgh BioQuarter
Edinburgh
EH16 4TJ

