



Irish Neonatal Health Alliance



26 Oak Glen View, Southern Cross,
Bray, Co Wicklow, Ireland, A98 Y234.

Telephone: 00 353 85 192 0602.

Email: info@inha.ie

Web: www.inha.ie

Dear Friends

For those of you who plan to visit us over the next few months can we please ask you to take a few minutes to read this letter.

Most people have never heard of **RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)**, even though nearly every child has had the virus by age two. RSV affects ALL babies but for preemies, the virus can be quite different. Babies born earlier than 37 weeks are at the highest risk for serious complications like pneumonia, bronchiolitis, and other sometimes fatal complications.

Our baby was born premature and had a low birth weight: these are among the highest risk factors for contracting RSV and developing serious complications.

Preventing the spread of RSV is very difficult. Thus, we must be vigilant about keeping our child safe during RSV season. The virus is spread through physical contact, in the air via a cough or sneeze, or by touching an infected object. The virus can live as long as six hours on hands and up to twelve hours on objects, and it spreads very easily, especially from child to child. Studies have also shown that infants pose an even higher risk of spreading RSV to others.

Since our baby was preterm, he/she did not acquire the necessary immunities to fight off infection. If our baby contracts RSV, he/she could be hospitalised and develop very serious complications.

We are kindly asking our visitors to be part of our strategy to keep our baby RSV safe by following a few simple guidelines that would safeguard our baby from contracting RSV or any other illness.

We kindly ask that all visitors do the following:

- When you arrive, please wash your hands and use hand sanitiser.
- Please do not touch or kiss our baby.
- Please, if it is possible, get a flu shot.
- Please refrain from coming over if you are currently sick and have not been symptom-free for at least 5 days, or if you live with someone who is currently sick, or have been in close contact with someone who is sick.
- If you smoke, we ask that you change your clothing and refrain from smoking prior to visiting, as a preemie's lungs are very sensitive to smoke.
- If you are parents to a baby or toddler, please refrain from bringing them to our house during RSV season.

Unfortunately, we will not be attending indoor events during RSV season. Our goal is to make it through this and the next RSV seasons without our baby contracting RSV or any other serious illness.

A preemie's lungs remain very fragile until they are 2 years old. Please understand that this letter is not meant to offend anyone, it is simply just to provide an explanation.

We hope you understand, and we appreciate your help keeping our babies safe.

Thank you.