NHS CLEFT PALATE IDENTIFICATION



For professionals involved in infant feeding

Could it be a Cleft Palate?

Up to 50% of clefts involve the palate only, varying in shape and size.





Cleft of the Soft Palate



Wide 'U' shaped Cleft Palate



Sub Mucous Cleft Palate

Presenting signs & symptoms

Nasal regurgitation during or after feeds Clicking sounds during feeds Continued difficulty latching at breast Tiring during feeds Prolonged feeds Faltering growth Bifid Uvula Increased work of breathing associated with above

Always visualise the palate

Best practice is to use a tongue depressor and torch, as per RCPCH guidelines.



The Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health (2014) "Palate Examination: Identification of Cleft Palate in the Newborn."

Incidence and Delayed Detection

Diagnosis 24 hours after birth is classified as delayed Annually, 10-20% of babies receive a delayed diagnosis of a cleft palate 18% of cleft palates are diagnosed between 1 week and 6 months of age The impact of a delayed detection for families can be devastating. Cleft Registry and Audit Network Database (2023) "Annual Report."

Cleft Specialist Nurses

Professionals supporting infant feeding are ideally placed to examine an infant's palate as part of their

own routine assessments. This additional contact provides opportunities to identify cleft palates that have been missed on the NIPE examinations and by other health care professionals. We aim to offer greater support through raising awareness and training, ultimately preventing a delayed diagnosis.

Useful resources		How to Refer
Palate examination: Identification of cleft palate in the newborn outset 2014	0	If a cleft is identified, please
Strich Associates if Africante Medicine Carl Las and Maine Associates Neur Cholar of Bearier Neur Cholar of Medicine De Carl Strict Carl Medicine The Cheneteckal Society of Grant Britan and Instant		phone your local Cleft Team
		as soon as possible using the
RCPCH Best Practice Guidelines		information on this QR code
Free 90 minute online course		Contact your local cleft nursing team for training and advice

Sibley, J; Geden, G; Blackwood G; Lewis, C; Sahunta, H; McDowall, L; MacDonald, C; Keenan, S; Reddy, C; Walton, C; Willshire, B; Dixey, E; Pattison, L; Stringer S; Habel, A; and Marsh, C (2024). Cleft Nursing Clinical Excellence Network 2024 ©