

Swaddled weighing



Swaddled weighing is now recommended to improve the weighing experience, by supporting physiological stability and behavioural organisation.

Babies nursed in the neonatal unit will require weighing during the week. This often requires removal of all clothing and nappy, and then a transfer out of the incubator onto the firm surface of the scales, where a baby is laid with no clothes on and weighed. The baby is then transferred back into the incubator.

It is recommended that where possible babies are weighed in the daytime, to reduce disturbance at nighttime when they should be sleeping. This also gives parents an opportunity to be present and involved in the caring of their baby.

Why swaddle?



Support the baby's own efforts at self-regulation



Helps maintain baby's autonomic stability and reduces stress



With baby more relaxed, reading on scales is quicker

Tips and tricks for swaddled weighing

- Prepare the equipment before starting
- Dim the lighting and speak softly to the baby
- Encourage the parents to swaddle the baby and do the handling/transfers
- Keep the baby close to your body when moving them between incubator/cot and scales
- A dummy is a great tool to use if they need extra support - the sucking action is calming and soothing.

How to swaddle weigh

What you'll need

- Weighing scales
- Towel on weighing pan
- Liner of nest/bedding
- Pre-weighed dry nappy
- Fresh bed linen and liner

Step by step

1. Two people should be available for the weighing process; ideally one of these would be the baby's parent/guardian.
2. Ideally the baby will be awake- often weighing can be done when cares are performed, as the baby will already be awake and will have a clean, dry nappy on.
3. Prepare the weighing scales with a soft surface on the weighing pan area, such as a folded towel. Ensure the weigh is set to '0' once the towel is in place.
4. Ensure the nappy the baby is wearing is clean and dry and pre- weighed.
5. Gently wrap the baby in the lining of its nest- so that he/she is enclosed in a flexed midline position.
6. Turn the baby gently into the side lying position, then pick the baby up and out of the incubator.
7. Hold the baby against your own body, for security. Do not elevate them through the air unsupported.
8. Transfer the baby to the weighing scales, whilst maintaining their side lying contained position. Provide containment and/ or a dummy as required.
9. Weigh the baby and document the weight.
10. One person should change the bedding in the incubator, with fresh lining, whilst it is empty. The second person- often the parent can keep the baby safe on the scales and interact with the baby if appropriate.
11. Return the baby to the incubator by the reverse process.
12. Gently remove the nest lining from under the baby and weigh.
13. Delete the weight of the nest lining and the clean nappy from the baby's weight to get the correct weight.
14. Parent/helper to settle the baby back into a comfortable position- until peaceful and recovered.



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swaddle
weighing