

Low Blood Pressure (Hypotension)

Why does a baby have low blood pressure?

Babies can have low blood pressure for many reasons. It is especially common in preemie babies just after birth. Reasons for low blood pressure include:

- blood loss before or during delivery
- fluid loss after delivery
- infection
- medications given to the mother before delivery

Sometimes it is not known why a baby's blood pressure is low. Low blood pressure is seen often in babies who have Respiratory Distress Syndrome. Low blood pressure can be life threatening.

How can low blood pressure be treated?

- a baby may be given extra fluid by vein.
- a baby can be placed on a medication to increase blood pressure. These drugs are referred to as "pressors". Dopamine is a common drug used.
- a baby may be transfused with blood. This is most often done if the suspected cause of low blood pressure is blood loss.

Low blood pressure usually resolves by time the baby goes home.