

# **Transient Tachypnea of the Newborn (TTN)**

## **What is transient tachypnea of the newborn?**

Transient tachypnea is fast breathing that gradually gets better.

## **What causes transient tachypnea?**

It is thought to be due to slow reabsorption of fetal lung fluid. Before birth the lungs continuously make fluid. Most of this fluid leaves the lung during a normal labor, as the baby comes down the birth canal. The rest must be absorbed by the baby during the first minutes to hours of life. In babies with TTN this process may last hours to days. TTN is more common in babies delivered by cesarean section without labor, because they did not get the hormonal signals during labor for the lung lymph channels to start emptying the lung of extra fluid.

## **How does a baby with transient tachypnea act?**

The baby will have some difficulty with breathing. He/she may

- Breathe rapidly
- Make the "ugh" sound with each breath, called grunting
- Have a widening of the nostrils with each breath, called flaring
- Need extra oxygen. Room air is 21% oxygen. Your baby may need higher oxygen to stay pink

## **How is transient tachypnea treated?**

Your baby will have his/her respirations, heart rate, and blood oxygenation monitored. In addition your baby may need one of the following:

- Oxygen. This is usually given by means of a plastic hood placed over the baby's head.
- CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure). This is a machine that uses a small amount of pressure through small tubes that fit into the baby's nostrils. Giving oxygen this way helps the air sacs in the lungs stay open, and helps keep the fluid out of the air sacs.
- Ventilator. Your baby may need a tube passed from the mouth into the trachea (windpipe) and into the lungs. This will help your baby breathe more effectively and better.

## **How long does transient tachypnea last?**

The time course is variable. It may last hours or days. Gradually the baby's need for oxygen will decrease. Then, his/her respiratory rate will slowly come down to normal. Some babies have fast respirations for several days.

At times, your baby may be fine (not needing any extra oxygen and eating well), but still be breathing fast. Your baby may go home with fast breathing if your doctor feels that he/she is otherwise stable.

## **Will it come back?**

No, once it resolves, it does not come back. If your baby develops a respiratory problem later on, it is due to some other cause.