

# How to recognise and treat neonatal encephalopathy without delay

Every year in Aotearoa/New Zealand, around 67 babies are diagnosed with neonatal encephalopathy (newborn brain injury).

If not treated within the right timeframe, neonatal encephalopathy may result in permanent lifelong brain injury.

The best treatment is body cooling as soon as possible.



Recognise



Communicate



Cool

Here's what you can do as a health practitioner, and remember to keep whānau involved at all stages:

1

## Recognise

### Consider neonatal encephalopathy:

- baby requiring resuscitation at birth
- low Apgar score at birth
- hyperalert or lethargic, weak or absent suck.

### NEWS (newborn early warning score):

- cord gases/lactate.



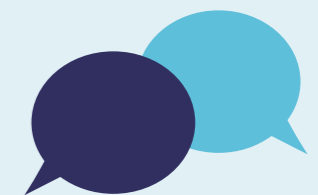
2

## Communicate

### Timely referral is crucial.

- **Discuss** your concerns immediately with a colleague.
- **Escalate** by consulting with the neonatal team.
- **Arrange** early transfer for ongoing neonatal care.

**Provide option to whānau for placental histology**



3

## Cool

### DON'T DELAY

Cooling to reduce brain damage ideally needs to start within six hours of birth.

**COOL EARLY.**

