

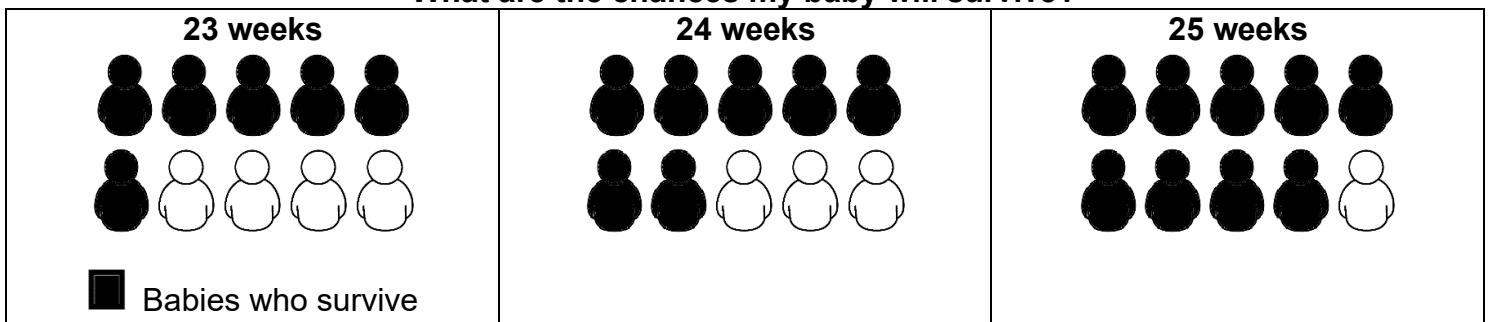


## The Very Early Baby Parent Information Leaflet

Having a new baby is an exciting event, but if your baby is born very early this can be stressful. We want you to have the most up-to-date information about what it means to be born this early. This may help you with decisions you are asked to make at this time.

**Each baby is different.** The information below shows survival for babies born in the North of England and admitted alive to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

### What are the chances my baby will survive?



Based on our previous experience and national recommendations, our advice is:

- 22 weeks; intensive care may be offered in some situations after detailed discussion
- 23 weeks; intensive care is offered
- 24 weeks and above; intensive care is given

Other factors, as well as being born very early, can affect whether a baby survives and whether they have long term problems. These include:

- Multiple births (twins, triplets)
- Babies with other abnormalities or genetic problems
- Infection in the womb
- Leaking of fluid from the womb for days or weeks before delivery
- Babies who are smaller than average

The needs of each family are different and your needs will be discussed with you.



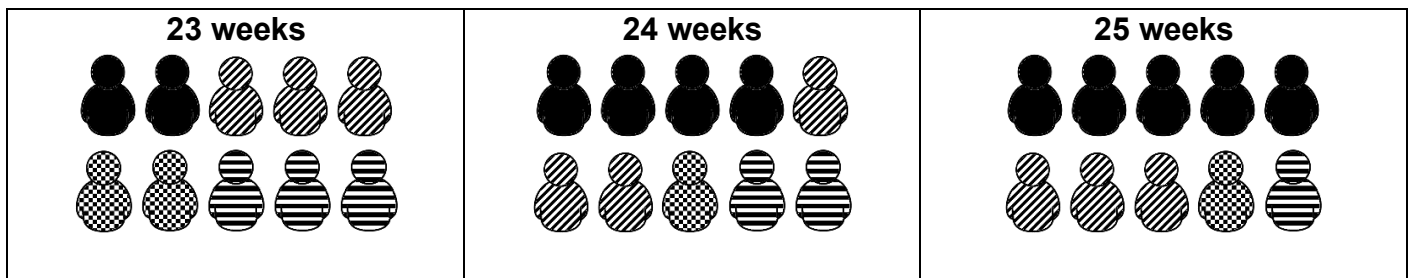
**If my baby survives, will he/she have problems in the future?**

The following information is provided to help you better understand the concerns if your baby is born very early. We have defined different kinds of disabilities as follows:

	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Understanding &amp; learning</b>	<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Eyesight</b>
<b>Mild disability</b>	Does not cause major problems on a day to day basis e.g. may be clumsy/struggle with pencil work	Learning difficulties e.g. may need extra help with school work	Mild hearing loss, but does not need hearing aids	Likely to need glasses
<b>Moderate disability</b>	May have a condition called cerebral palsy*, but can walk	Needs extra support to be able to learn	Needs hearing aids	Poor eyesight, even with glasses
<b>Severe disability</b>	Unable to walk without help	Likely to need lifelong care	Deaf	Blind

\*Cerebral palsy: a condition that affects muscle control and movement

**If my baby survives, what are the chances he/she will have a disability?**



No disability    
  Mild disability    
  Moderate disability    
  Severe disability

- Some problems only become clear when a child is older (e.g. school age).
- Approximately 2 out of 3 children born very early will need some extra help at school. The main problems seem to be problems with attention and short term memory.
- Approximately one out of ten children born very early have autism spectrum disorder (a condition that affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them).



**NORNET**  
northern neonatal network

It is important to remember that a baby's family and surroundings play a very important role in development. Your Doctor and/or physiotherapist can give you more information about how to help your baby's development.

**We hope this information is useful to you and your family. We are here to support you. If you have any questions, please ask us.**

### **For further information**

#### **Contact details**

Neonatal Consultant or Sister

Please ask for details of your local contacts

### **Useful Resources**

Charitable organisations:

Tiny Lives: <http://www.tinylives.org.uk/>

BLISS: [www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk).

NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/premature-early-labour/>

Northern Neonatal Network. Modified from BC Womens Health Centre,  
Vancouver with permission Date Feb 2020

Reviewed: March 2026

Next review date: March 2027