

The Newborn Check

Nursing

What the routine newborn examination covers, and what gets escalated.

Head to toe, front and back, with the baby warm and undressed for the check.

Routinely checked

Colour, tone, activity and cry

Head, fontanelles, face, palate

Eyes, including the red reflex

Heart sounds and femoral pulses

Abdomen, cord, genitalia, anus

Spine, hips, limbs, digits, skin

Escalate promptly

Grunting, flaring, recession or apnoea

Central cyanosis or persistent pallor

Weak or absent femoral pulses

Poor tone, poor feeding, temperature instability

Jaundice within the first 24 hours

Any parental concern about the baby

Educational reference. Newborn examination is a defined competency. Escalate all abnormal findings under local neonatal pathways.