

Holidays with Premies

The holiday season is especially tough for families with premature babies. Whether they are in the NICU or at home, life is just so much more complex because there are the baby's special health needs to consider. Here are some tips for families with premies to help make the holiday season a little brighter:

IN THE NICU:

- **Decorate the Incubator/Crib.** Ask family and friends to send you cards for the baby so that the NICU has its share of holiday cheer. Also ask younger siblings and nieces and nephews to send in drawings and pictures of the season, too. Note: Make sure to ask your nurse for instructions on decorating the incubator or crib for safety and health purposes.
- **Bring in a Holiday Outfit or Blanket.** If your baby is able to wear an outfit, consider asking a family member or friend to "gift" a holiday outfit for the occasion. It doesn't have to be focused on the holiday season, but a nice outfit is special and can allow for some great photos for email/blog/website updates for others. If your baby is not able to wear outfits yet, then consider asking for a nice blanket that can be put over the incubator or can be used to swaddle the baby.

AT HOME ON LOCKDOWN:

- **The Web is Your Friend.** Whether or not you are a Facebook fan or just like to send emails or update a blog, give your family and friends access to the baby by providing some regular photos and quick updates. Also consider video chats as well so those that cannot come over to say hello can see the baby. If you do not have access to a computer with video chat capability, put it on your list wish to family and friends to see if you can borrow one (or maybe they can all go in on a set up as a gift).
- **Holiday Cheer, Premie Style.** Holiday cards are wonderful but if you don't have a lot of time to go out into the germ-fest world to buy cards and stamps and such, consider some simple home made cards that can be copied. Here is the kicker - include a handprint and foot print of the baby. ☺

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