

Key Parts of NEC-Zero Include:

1. Feeding human milk
2. Helping the team recognize NEC early with a score called GutCheck^{NEC}
3. Limiting the number of days antibiotics are given after birth
4. Promoting a team approach to feeding with standard protocols
5. Avoiding antacids



Questions to Ask

Photo credit: William Nyberg and Tanya Clay

last reviewed April, 2018©



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF NURSING
NEC-Zero

Support

NEC Society

necsociety.org/resources

Hand to Hold

handtohold.org

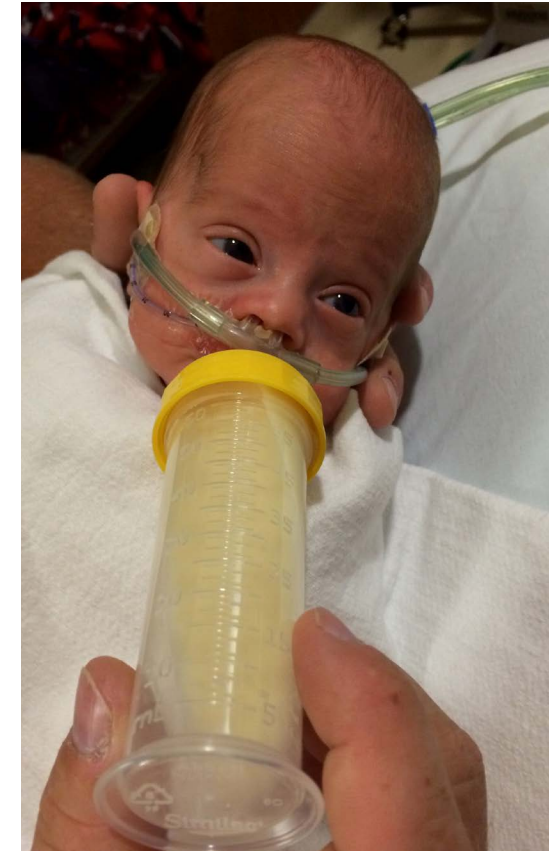
The Morgan Leary Vaughan Fund

morgansfund.org



NEC-Zero is a team delivered intervention with a goal to prevent and improve early diagnosis of NEC.

For more information visit
neczero.nursing.arizona.edu



What is Necrotizing Enterocolitis?



Overview of NEC

Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC): (nek-roh-TIE-zing en-ter-oh-coh-LIE -tis) is a condition where portions of the bowel (intestines) undergo tissue death (necrosis). It can cause the bowel to break open and allow an infection to spread throughout the body.

Infants who develop NEC (often pronounced as “neck”) are typically those born before 32 weeks of pregnancy, but NEC can occur in full term infants as well.

The chance of your baby developing NEC is low. However, NEC is serious and sometimes causes death.

How Does NEC Happen?

Many factors play a role, including:

- An immature immune system
- A weak bowel
- Formula feeding; babies who receive human milk have a lower risk of getting NEC
- Lack of oxygen

Symptoms

Things to watch for:

- Blood in dirty diaper
- A belly that is swollen, red, grey, or tender
- Stops breathing (apnea)
- Heartbeat slows down (bradycardia)
- Body temperature too low or too high
- Less active or change in behavior
- Not digesting feedings well

Treatment for NEC

After diagnosis, treatment begins immediately and includes:

- Stopping all feedings
- Tube in the stomach to drain air and fluid
- X-rays
- Antibiotics
- Sometimes surgery



Recovery

Nutrition and fluids are given intravenously while the bowel is resting. Your baby’s doctor will decide when and how to re-start feeding. Babies recover differently from NEC.

While many babies recover, some will face long-term health issues and some can die. Losing so much bowel can cause long-term health problems like allergies, short gut syndrome, liver or kidney failure.