

JAUNDICE BABIES/ NEWBORN JAUNDICE

Newborn jaundice is when your baby's skin and the white parts of the eyes look yellow. Yellowing of the skin can be more difficult to see in brown or black skin. It may be easier to see on the palms of the hands or the soles of the feet. Other symptoms of newborn jaundice may include: dark, yellow urine (a newborn baby's urine should be colorless) and pale-colored poop (it should be yellow or orange).

Jaundice is caused by the build-up of a substance in the blood called bilirubin. Newborn jaundice is very common—about 3 in 5 babies (60 percent) have jaundice, particularly in babies born before 38 weeks' gestation (preterm babies) and some breast-fed babies. It is common in newborn babies because babies have a high number of red blood cells in their blood, which are broken down and replaced frequently. Also, a newborn baby's liver is not fully developed, so it's less effective at removing the bilirubin from the blood.

Newborn jaundice usually happens a few days after birth. Most of the time, it's mild, doesn't hurt your baby and goes away without treatment. But if a baby has severe jaundice and doesn't get quick treatment, it can lead to severe consequences such as brain damage.

Most babies with jaundice don't need treatment. Symptoms normally pass within 10 to 14 days, although they can occasionally last longer.

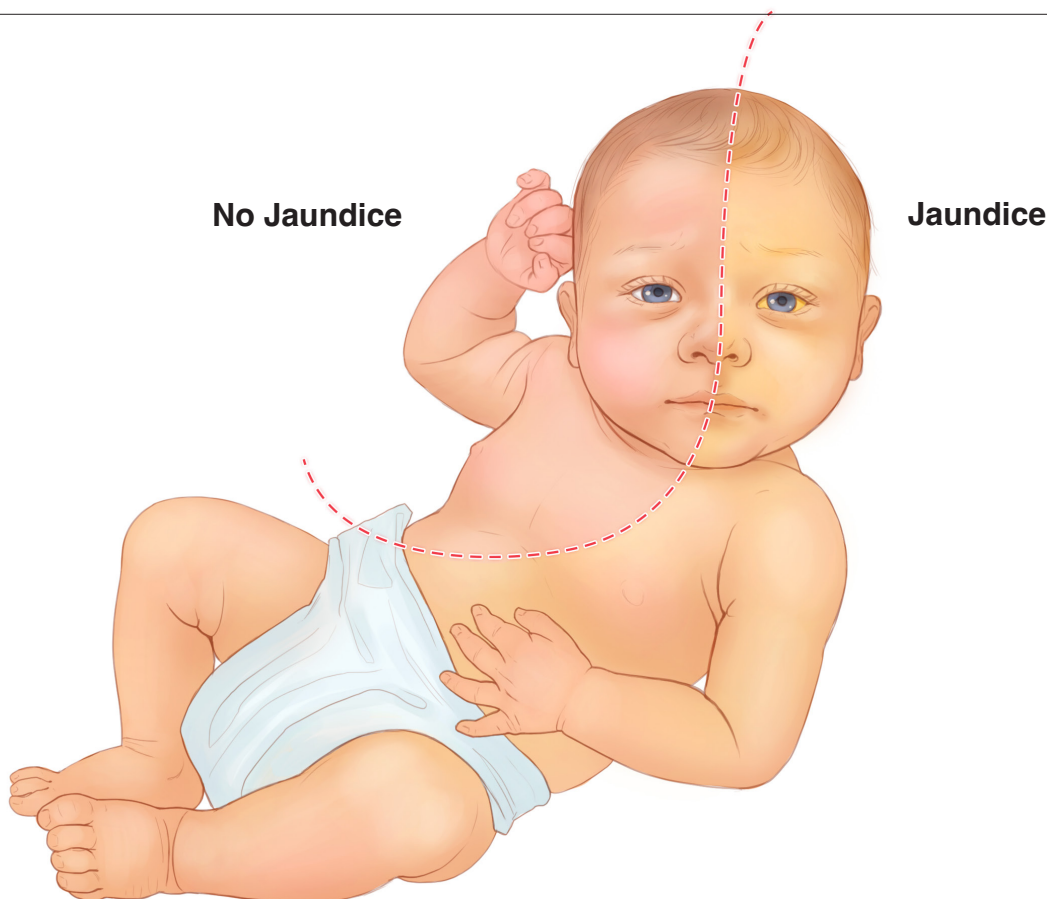
If your baby has mild jaundice, their provider may recommend that you breastfeed your baby more often so as to produce more bowel movements. This helps to get rid of bilirubin. Babies with more severe jaundice may need treatment, including:

Phototherapy treatment (also called light therapy or bili lights). This is when your baby is placed under special lights that help your baby's body change bilirubin into a form that can exit the body in urine

Intravenous immunoglobulin (also called IVIg). If you and your baby have different blood types, your baby may get immunoglobulin (a blood protein) through a needle into a vein. This can help treat the jaundice so that your baby is less likely to need an exchange transfusion.

Exchange transfusion. This is where your baby's blood is removed using a thin tube (catheter) placed in their blood vessels and replaced with blood from a matching donor.

If a baby with very high levels of bilirubin is not treated, there's a risk they could develop permanent brain damage. This is known as kernicterus.



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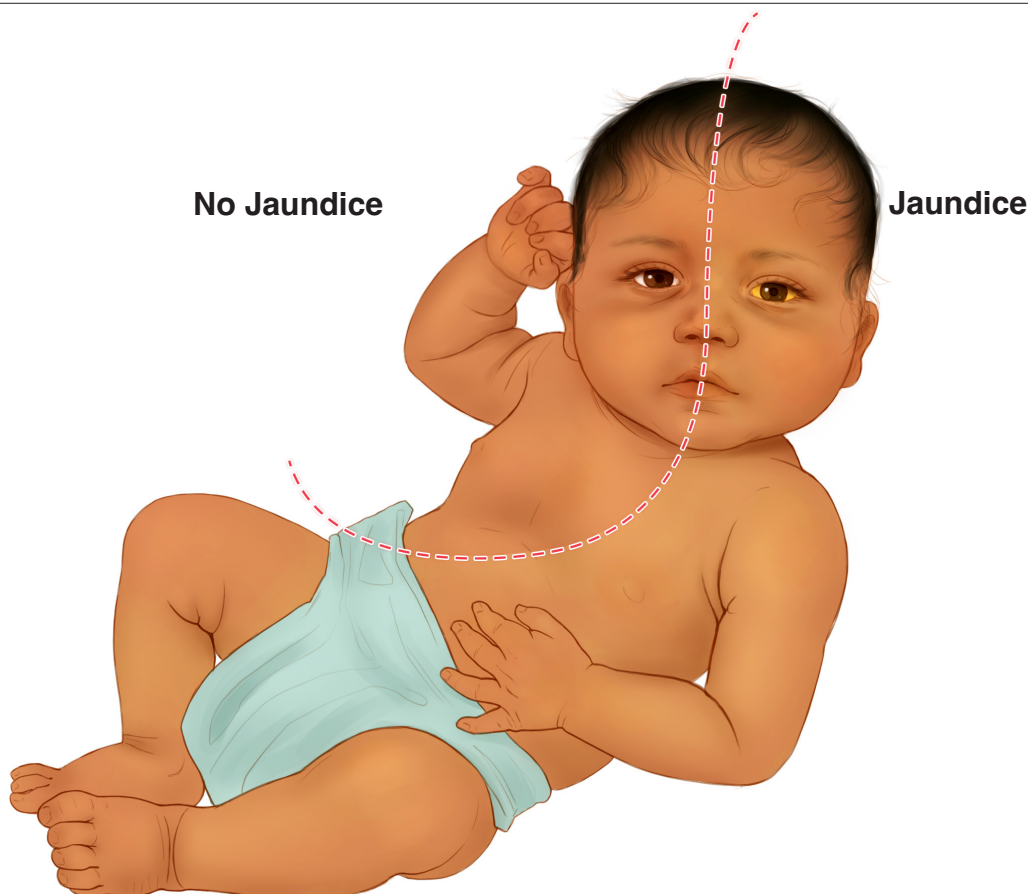
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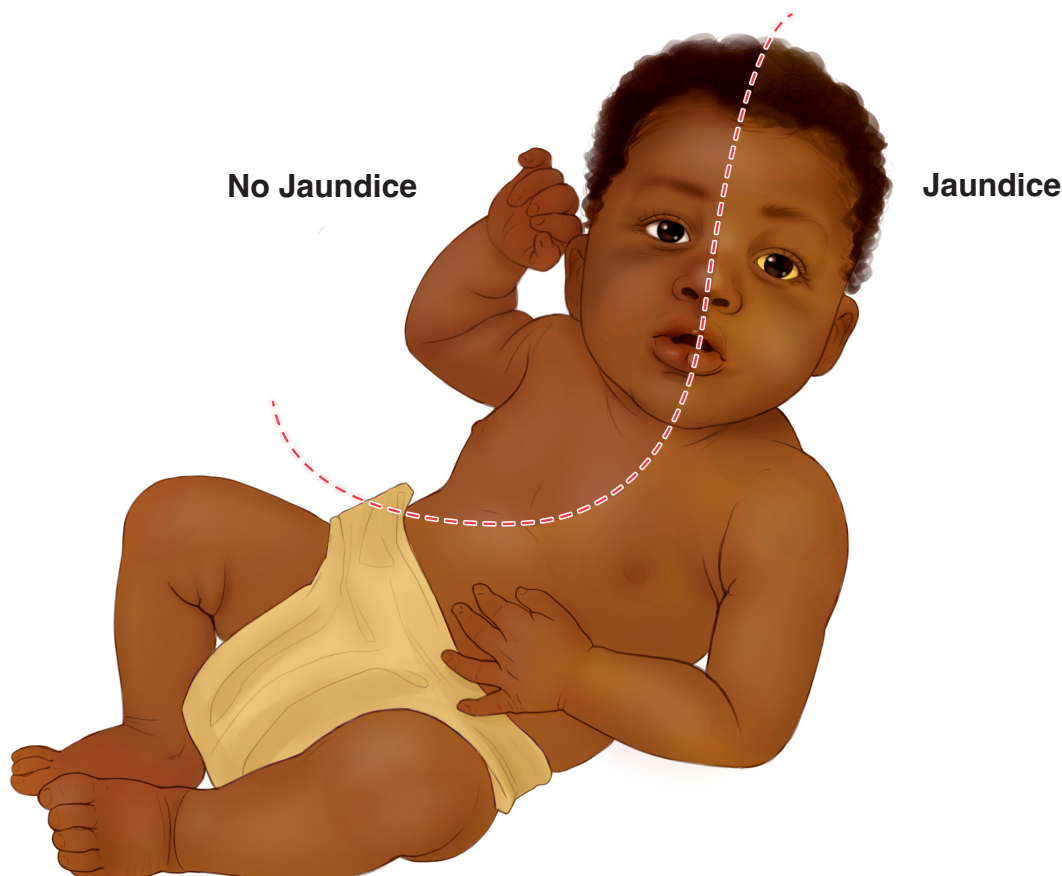
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