

Mom's Moment: Learning to Love the NICU

Written by Nadine Bubeck

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I was recently asked to answer an "Ask The Expert" question for [Pregnancy & Newborn Magazine](#) about surviving the NICU. While I'm no expert, I reflected on my experience with my first born, and the roller coaster of emotions that took over me. Hope this helps someone in a similar position!

Question:

I gave birth to my baby prematurely, and it looks like we'll be spending the next few weeks in the NICU. This is not what I anticipated my first weeks as a mother looking like. Is there anything I can do to make things feel more memorable and less medical?

Answer:

First, I sympathize. We all envision perfection. We all want a full term pregnancy, flawless birth, healthy baby, and a swift stay in the hospital. And when that doesn't happen, a piece of us might feel gipped, resentful, and sad. So I hear you—I understand—this isn't what you expected. I want you to honor your feelings and allow yourself to go through the roller coaster of emotions. Cry and laugh--everything you are feeling is OK. Your feelings are real.

Next, get an outlet. Sitting in the NICU for days: hearing all those machine beeps, doctor visits, tests, etc.—it's exhausting and draining. I suggest journaling your emotions; write a daily letter to your baby; read aloud to your newborn; color in a coloring book—anything that will keep your mind emotionally occupied.

Another thing: kangaroo. Should your child's situation permit, utilize this method of caring for premature babies in which infants are held skin-to-skin with a parent. I remember the first time I kangarooed with my son; happy tears streamed from my face as I snuggled my tiny child. It is the ultimate bonding experience for preemie parents. You'll love it.

Finally, realize the NICU a blessing in disguise. You have access to incredible resources: doctors, nurses, and experts. Pick their brain. Learn from them. Embrace the experience and consider the NICU a transitional tool between giving birth and going home.

My son's stay in the NICU was the longest week of my life. I was overjoyed and overwhelmed at the same time, rejoicing in becoming a mother while worrying about my 4-pound son. But every birth is a blessing—our own magical story of welcoming our baby into the world. The NICU will soon become a mere memory, and you'll eventually become like me—admiring your beautiful toddler and being amazed that he's come such a long way.

[About Nadine](#)

[Nadine Bubeck](#) is a multi-media personality, author, blogger, PR pro and blessed boy mama. The TV News anchor turned all things mama contributes to numerous publications and is often utilized on TV as a parenting expert. Her niche: everything mom, baby, toddler, child, and family. She is the author of [Expecting Perfect: My Bumpy Journey to Mommyhood](#), and founder of All Things Mama Media, LLC, the parent company for [All Things Mama TV](#), [BoyMamas.com](#), and more.

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