

A Premie's Basic Needs



Warmth

Premature babies lack the body fat necessary to maintain their body temperature, even when swaddled with blankets. Therefore, incubators or radiant warmers are used to keep the babies warm. Incubators are made of transparent plastic, and they completely surround an infant to keep him or her warm, decrease the chance of infection, and limit water loss. Radiant warmers are electrically warmed beds open to the air. These are used when the medical staff needs frequent access to the baby for care. Every preemie can benefit by a hat to help keep body heat from escaping.

They are often so small that full term baby clothing/blankets will not fit them. Imagine making a hat to fit a lime; this is just the size of a 1lb preemie. These babies can actually be held in the palm of your hand.

Preemies' skin is so fragile that the mere weight of clothing can cause a burn similar to a rug burn. Because of this yarns need to be super soft. Please select machine washable yarns of quality fiber content. Many "bargain" yarns are too harsh for preemie skin.

Blankets are also needed right away to cover the incubator from the overhead lights. Much later, the baby will actually use the blanket. A typical preemie blanket is a 12-inch square.

Sadly, some preemies are not able to survive and burial gowns are also needed. Imagine the grief of a preemie parent at this time. Please consider making a gown.

Once items are completed, they should be hand washed to remove any oils, perfumes or dirt. Do not use fabric softeners or perfumes. Place the clean item/s in a zip lock bag and deliver to our cradle for delivery.

Thank you,
K2Tog – Uniting the Community through Needlearts

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