

ToP

The ToP programme® supports you and your preterm baby after discharge from the hospital. It aims to enable you to support the early development of your baby with joy and self-confidence.

Why

You as a parent(s) are the most important person(s) in your baby's life. Therefore, the bond between you and your baby is encouraged since s/he was born. Physical contact and understanding the body language of your baby are very important in this process of bonding.

Over time, in the hospital, parents are more and more in charge of taking care of their baby. By the time the baby goes home, they are the experts in taking care of their baby.

Many parents of premature born babies feel, that after coming home, they need to get to know their baby again. This is understandable because the baby needs to adjust to the new environment. At this moment your baby is capable of maintaining its own temperature and is growing sufficiently. Therefore, s/he has more energy to focus on his/her surroundings. Your baby seeks a balance between his/her need for security and the curiosity of discovering the world around him/her.

Changing diapers, feeding, cuddling, playing, or being walked in the pram are ordinary daily activities. However, sometimes these everyday activities can give preterm babies more information than they can manage at that time. It often happens that they get upset more easily and are less easy to comfort than babies born at term age. Sometimes they also have more difficulty in making contact or in maintaining their attention.

The unpredictable behaviour of their baby demands a lot of additional energy, especially when parents are overwhelmed, tired or stressed after the birth of their preterm baby.

The ToP programme therefore supports parents at home, helping them to recognise their baby's behaviours, signals and how to respond in a positive way.

Method

The ToP programme is made to fit the needs of the individual baby and gives continuation to the developmental care, which started in the incubator period. The ToP programme does not focus on the problems, but on the potentials that your baby has, and the attempts that s/he makes to explore his/her environment and to adjust to it.

The aim of the programme is that your baby can participate in the activities that are important to him/her at that moment, in an active way, without stress.

The healthcare professional from the hospital will explain the content of the ToP programme to you, before you go home with your baby.

An experienced ToP trained paediatric physiotherapist carries out the programme and visits you at home. S/he has followed additional training in understanding the 'body language' of young children. This body language consists of behaviours by which young children show their interests, potential and needs. Together you follow your baby's behaviour: what is my baby trying to accomplish, what can my baby do by itself, does s/he need support and how can I provide this?

The support that is given, does not consist of fixed 'exercises', but is determined by the choices that suit your baby, you and your family.

For whom

The ToP programme is offered to:

- All babies that are born before 32 weeks of pregnancy and/or have a birth weight below 1500 grams.
- A requirement is that your baby has a health insurance and that there is a ToP trained paediatric physiotherapist available in your neighbourhood.

You can find all participating ToP paediatric physiotherapists on our website: www.top-eop.nl

When and how often

The first home visit takes place within the first two weeks after discharge from the hospital. The ToP programme consists of 12 home visits. All appointments are made regarding the needs of your baby and in consultation with you. The programme ends when your child is about 1 year old.

Effects

The ToP programme is based on an intervention that has been extensively studied scientifically in the Amsterdam region from 2004 until 2014. On our website you can read more about the positive outcomes of these studies regarding the development of the child and the parent-child interaction. Since then it has been implemented throughout almost every region in The Netherlands.

Continuously, the quality and effectiveness of the programme is being evaluated. This leads to the best possible care for your baby, with regards to the specific needs of baby and parent and considering the latest scientific knowledge.

This is why we also ask you to fill in some questionnaires during the period you are participating in the ToP programme. These questionnaires can be filled in at a safely secured website: www.hetklikt.nu

Your ToP paediatric physiotherapist will give you all the information you need to work with this website.

Costs

The ToP programme is included in the basic package of every health insurance in The Netherlands. There are no costs accompanied with participation.

Expertise centre

The Expertise centre for Developmental support for Preterm born children (EOP-nl) was founded to improve the development of the preterm born baby and the wellbeing of the preterm baby and its parents, after discharge from the hospital.

The Expertise centre:

- coordinates, facilitates and monitors the quality of the ToP programme
- Provides training to professionals that work with preterm babies and their parents
- Conducts research and promotes innovation of effective and efficient support for premature babies and their parents.

Cooperation

Good communication and cooperation is valued highly within the Top programme amongst all professionals that are involved, for instance the paediatrician, the general practitioner, home care or other healthcare professionals.

When your baby is going home from the hospital, the paediatric physiotherapist from the hospital will provide information to the ToP paediatric physiotherapist that will come to your home.

When your baby is 6 and 12 months old, your ToP paediatric physiotherapist will write a report to the paediatrician and other healthcare professionals that are involved. These reports will always be made in consultation with you.

All paediatric physiotherapists that are conducting the Top programme are contracted by the Expertise centre for Developmental support for Preterm born children, that coordinates the care and provides quality assurance of the programme.

Contact:

Expertisecentrum Ontwikkelingsondersteuning
Prematuren, EOP-nl

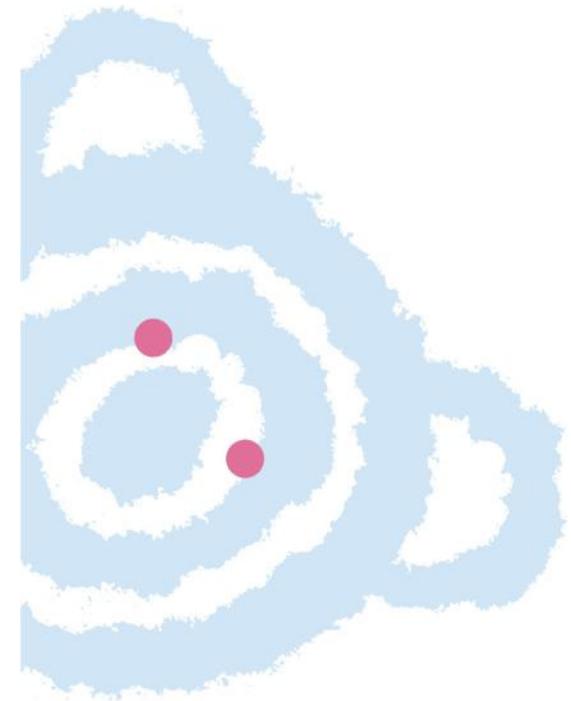
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Are you going home with your preterm baby?

In this leaflet you will find information about support for your baby at home.



Integrated developmental support for preterm born children and their parents.

