

Steps to Becoming a Strong Advocate for Your Baby

- 1. Remember that your baby's life is on the line.** It is that serious.
- 2. Information must be gathered before opinions are rendered.**
- 3. Your baby is different from his/her neighbor.**
- 4. Pick your battles.** Everything is not equally important.
- 5. Fall on your sword for that which you care about most deeply.**
- 6. Be an excellent student of the NICU** but remember that you are not a teacher.
- 7. Choose the right time to advocate.** Never during the doctor's "rounds," in a crowd, or during a casual conversation in the hallway.
- 8. Find a champion to support your cause** (another neonatologist or a nurse, for example. Never another parent!).
- 9. Go out of your way** to be sure that all key players are on the same page (doctor, nurse, therapist, nutritionist, spouse, etc.).
- 10. Know when to say "when."** Always remember that you are on the same team as the doctors and nurses. When advocating for a particular issue, it is a battle fought in the larger war. The war is won when your baby is home. Losing a few battles will not change the definition of victory.
- 11. Thank the loser.** Give them another chance to help you with something else.