

### *Antenatal*

A 20 week scan can identify the condition of cleft and it is a good idea to prepare for the birth and afterwards by talking to Cleft NZ. You can share your concerns , get answers to any questions and importantly visit your Cleft Team before baby is born.

### *Birth*

Congratulations – make sure you celebrate the birth of your much loved baby. Of course you will feel shocked if you weren't prepared, take a deep breath, give yourself time out, and look to family and friends for their support.

Cleft NZ can also help right from day one. Remember, your baby is totally unaware of any difference and just looks to mum & dad for love!

### *Neonatal – Newborn*

Important steps will be taken as soon as possible to ensure both baby and parents make excellent progress over the next few weeks

#### **Diagnosis**

A Paediatrician will check your baby's overall health.

#### **Feeding**

You may be able to fully breastfeeding your baby. An LC will support you with correct positioning for baby. If you require specialised feeding equipment your SLT will organise it for you.

#### **Assessment and the Plan**

You will visit the Cleft team at a combined clinic and they will give you the Care Plan for your baby.

#### **Call Cleft NZ**

We are here to help all parents and their children so make contact as soon as possible for advice and support. You are not alone.

## *Pre-surgery - from 1 week*

A "bonnet" or taping may be worn to reposition the lip before surgery takes place.

## *Lip repair - 3-5 months*

Surgical repair of the lip

## *Post-surgical recovery*

2-3 days hospital stay with the use of arm splints . You may be able to continue to breast feed your baby. Check with your surgeon

This will be an adjustment time to how different your baby now looks, and there may also be a temporary behaviour change in your baby. Any behaviour changes are always temporary and it may help to talk to us about your concerns at this time.

Post surgical followup appointment is at 6-8 weeks.

## *6 months*

### Dental health

Start cleaning your baby's teeth as soon as they appear, enrol them in a dental service (school dental nurse or family dentist) and ask for 6 monthly check ups.

### Grommets

Grommets may be needed from this time for recurrent glue ear.

### Hearing/Ear checks

Your baby's first hearing check will be at around 6 months of age. Earlier tests can be arranged if you have concerns about your baby's hearing.

## *Palate repair - 9-12 months*

Palate repair is carried out which may mean 2-3 days hospital stay. Armsplints are usual for 3 weeks after the surgery.

Your baby may prefer solids – it is necessary to make them soft and runny and a non suck method of feeding is usual for 3 weeks after the surgery. Post surgical followup appointment is at 6-8 weeks

## *School Starts*

### 5 YEARS

- What a great milestone – party time!

- If you have any concerns at all just talk to us at Cleft NZ about starting school as we have some resource available to parents and kids.(Clancy has a Cleft)
- Speech therapy may continue at school.
- Be prepared and prepare your child. Children are curious about difference so prepare some answers and always look for any changes in your child's behaviour to alert you to what is happening at school.

#### 6 YEARS +

- Ongoing 1-2 yearly appointments continue

#### 10 YEARS +

- Dental review to check teeth.

#### 12-16 YEARS

- Orthodontic treatment to straighten teeth and improve occlusion (bite).

#### 16 YEARS +

- Young adults can still contact the Cleft Clinic for extra information they want to know about further surgery, genetic information when starting a family, or psychological support.