



# Probiotics (Infloran)

Whānau/Family Information – Neonatal Services

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## Why do we use probiotics in preterm infants?

Pēpi/Babies born prematurely, or those that have very low birth weights, are at risk of a bowel infection called NEC. This stands for necrotising enterocolitis. NEC is a serious life threatening bowel infection in preterm pēpi that can occur in the first few weeks of life. To assist in the prevention of NEC probiotics can be given to help the gut improve its function by adding good bacteria to your pēpi premature gut.

## What are probiotics?

Probiotics come in a capsule of powder and the capsule is called Infloran. It contains two common live bacteria called: Bifidobacterium, and Lactobacillus.

These bacteria exist naturally in the gut and are also present in breastmilk. Research has shown that adding probiotics improves the balance of bacteria in the gut and reduces gut infections like NEC.

## Does my Pēpi need probiotics?

We recommend that your pēpi receives probiotics if:

- he/she was born less than 32 weeks gestation, and/or
- weighed under 1500 g at birth, or
- if your doctor recommends probiotics

## How are probiotics given to my pēpi?

If your pēpi is eligible for probiotics, a powder called Infloran will be given once a day starting the day after birth. It will be mixed in water initially and then in breastmilk or milk mixture and given down the nasogastric tube.

## Will there be any side effects?

Side effects are not common, but we will monitor your pēpi for any changes. Things to look for include a bloated tummy or excess wind. In very rare cases an infection can occur in the blood. Probiotics are eliminated by the pēpi in their bowel motion. Please let staff know if you notice any changes in your pēpi.

## How do we know if the probiotics are making a difference?

If your pēpi tummy is soft and they are passing regular bowel motions and tolerating feeds these are good signs your baby is tolerating the probiotics supplement.

## How long does Infloran continue?

Infloran is usually continued until your pēpi is 36 weeks corrected, or sometimes your doctor may recommend continuing longer.

*If you have any questions about your pēpi health please ask your nurse.  
She/he can direct you to the right person to give you more information if required.*

