

### Meals/meal train

*"It was nice to come home from the NICU and know my family had a home cooked meal."* –Heather

*"My family always brought us dinner and cleaned our house. Sometimes they simply drove us up there because they knew how drained we were. Literally anything helps when your babies are in the NICU."* –Liliana

### Yard work or other time of the year chores

*"Came to help tear down the Christmas decorations, I had a December 23<sup>rd</sup> baby."* – Abigail

*"The most helpful things for us was people who helped take the trash out, mow the lawn, and bring our other child to school".* -Natalie

### Gas cards

*"Several people gave us gas gift cards because we drive an hour to the hospital."* –Melissa

*"My family from Mexico got together to collect money in the streets for gas. It wasn't a lot but just the thought and the time they spent doing all of that was amazing."* –Daisy

*"A gas card is always a good idea even if it's only ten minutes away."* –

### Offering to watch family's other children

*"Someone to help with my other little one. It's hard when you have a child too young to go the NICU so you can't visit every day. To have someone help now and then so you can is a great blessing."* –Stacie

*"My mother cleaned my house and took care of my other children."* –Dana

*"We've been here 166 days and my mom has stayed at my house the whole time caring for my two year old so I could be at the hospital. That is the biggest selfless act anyone has done."* –Serina

*"Watched my two year old at no charge."* –Louise

## Helping Out

When going through the NICU friends and family often ask what they can do to help. They understand that you have enough going on and want to do what they can to help out in efforts to ease the burden of the NICU.

It can be tough to accept help. However, understand that this is one way that people feel that they can show their love and support, while hopefully making things a little easier for you.

When others ask what they can do to help, Mighty Miracles Foundation compiled a list of former NICU families' favorite things that their family and friends did that helped or meant a lot to them.

When friends and family ask what they can do give them a copy of this list or direct them to a copy at [www.mightymiraclesfoundation.org](http://www.mightymiraclesfoundation.org).

### Visa gift cards

*"Visa gift cards to cover gas, meals on the go, and childcare for our other two children."* –Samantha

*"The thing that helped us most while we were in the NICU was gift cards."* – Brittany,

### Gift certificates to nearby restaurants

*"Gift cards to nearby restaurants was the best for us."* –Misty

*"Definitely the best thing was gift cards to local restaurants."* –Bettie

### Cleaning house and/or helping with laundry

*"My mom and mother-in-law cleaned my entire house, and then made us several homemade freezer meals we could thaw and make."* –Julianna mother to Emmett

*"I wish someone would have cleaned my house."* –Danielle

*"They helped with housework so I could spend more time with my NICU baby as well as my other little one at home."* –Louise

### Cards, emails, and texts

*"When a person has a very premature baby there often isn't many cards, balloons, flowers. It was nice to receive a card or hear some tell simply tell me congratulations, recognizing there was a new life."* –Amanda

*"Coworkers made a beautiful huge card with lots of prayers for my baby. I kept it in his room so the prayers stayed with him."* Cheryl

### Visiting

*“Brought me coffee and came for a visit. We would meet up in the cafeteria and have a coffee. It was nice to have a break.” –Lori Ann*

*“It was nice to have people visit at the hospital.” –Robyn*

*“My mom visited him with me every morning and then we would have coffee and breakfast in the cafeteria before I would go back up.” –Tamra*

*“My father-in-law came every single Saturday. It sounds silly but having someone else show a commitment to the NICU made me and my hubby feel less alone in the journey.” –Amanda*

*“Our NICU was an hour away. I know it was hard for people to visit, but some took the time to make the drive and visit with us and our son. That was the best thing anyone could do for us.” –Lauren*

*“My best friend who lives in another state sent me a care package including hand sanitizer, a pretty journal, Chap Stick, lotion, etc. She also mailed me cards and hand written letters periodically to let me know she was thinking of me.” –Beth*

### Personalizing the NICU Experience

*“My sister made sign for us with number cutouts and I used it each day to take a picture with her and post it in my blog. I loved it.” –Mary*

*“One of my friends brought a blanket that was special for their family for us to borrow. It was a reminder that she was always thinking of me. She encouraged me to rest when I could on the NICU couch and serve as a more personal touch to the room.” –Amanda*

*“My aunt’s coworker had a special build a bear made for my son with boxing gloves on for us to use for his monthly pictures. It was so sweet and special!” –Tamra*

### Cafeteria gift cards/meal tickets

*“Some gave us meal tickets for the hospital.” –Traci*

### NICU goodie/gift bag

*“Bring food that can be heated in the NICU microwave.” –Abigail*

*“Getting a care package in the mail that had Chap Stick, face wipes, granola bars, and a gift certificate.” –Jennifer*

*“A friend gave me a NICU gift bag. It had all kinds of things in it. I hope to do it for my NICU when my babies turn one next month.” –Amanda*

### Freezer/Freezer storage

*“A group brought me a deep freezer for all of my pumped milk at home.” –Serina*

*“My in laws gave me their deep freezer when I ran out of room for all of my pumped milk.” –Amanda*

### Prayers/prayer chains

*“The best thing that people did for us was PRAY.” –Vanessa*

*“Prayer chains were amazing. Getting a text one night about people praying that we didn’t even know.” –Jennifer*

**Be a friend.** This might sound vague or a given, but this is often one of the best things a person can do. Whether it is just being there, visiting, listening, or lending a shoulder to cry or rest on.

*“Brought over dinner and didn’t ask when the babies were coming home.”*  
–Sarah

*“A friend who had been through her own worst case scenario came to visit. She was the best at giving comfort. Mostly by listening instead of telling me everything would be fine.”* – Kathleen

*“... Going out with me to help take my mind off of things.”* –Robyn

*“Convincing me to sleep in every once in a while knowing that my little guy was in good hands.”* –Lindsay

*“The best thing that they are doing is praying and calling to check in for updates of myself and baby.”* –Kim

*“Leslie actually calculated how much I was pumping vs how much they were tube-feeding to reassure me I was doing fine”.* –Sarah

*“I really appreciate a group picture of my coworkers at an event dressed up with a miss you sign. It was nice they took the time to stop and think about me”.* -Jena

#### **Other ideas and suggestions:**

*“Someone dropped off lactation cookies.”* –Kathleen

*“My mother-in-law crochet some blankets and stuff for my son and donated some to the NICU. It was really nice and brought a little bit of home to the NICU.”* –Rebecca

*“...preemie clothes, a boppy for the hospital, a special blanket for the hospital, and lots of prayers.”* –Traci

*“My ‘adopted parents’ got me a gift card to my favorite spa in town to get my hair done, facial, mani/pedi, and my best friend got me a massage. It was so nice to have a me day and get to feel like a woman again. I wouldn’t have done it for myself at that time.”*  
–Amanda

*“Grocery delivery.”* –Serina

*“One friend is a professional organizer. She went through all the baby shower stuff and set the nursery up for me so it was ready when baby came home. Another friend offered to do the thank you notes for all my shower gifts”.* -Kathleen