



**NICUs Should
Help Children
Get Healthy.
Not Make Them
Sick.**

The Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is where very sick children with compromised immune systems receive special care. It was no surprise to us, that this would become the most popular destination for disinfection devices.

When a child needs to stay in a NICU, you should not have to worry that they could get an infection from a staff member or someone visiting the area. They are supposed to be there to get better. However, this is not always the case as there are many risk factors in a NICU such as the spread of hospital acquired infections.

One of the most common factors is the presence of mobile devices. Based on a case study, we conducted earlier this year, 79% of these portable electronics carrying pathogenic bacteria on them.

To combat this, NICUs enforce diligent handwashing and often ask parents to wear gowns – some even ban the use of mobile phones altogether.

NICUs are unique units in the hospital as they have a steady flow of parents entering and exiting. Often parents use their mobile phones to take photos with their children but more importantly to update friends and family about the status of the sick child. They're often unaware of the hidden risks of having your phone on hand when visiting your sick baby.

An average NICU staff will utilize a variety of mobile devices over the course of a normal shift.

From staff mobile phones to vocera communication devices, these mobile devices are a normal part of working in the NICU. They make work a lot easier for team's, but they can be a hassle to wipe down and can be dangerous if not done properly.

On the one hand, these devices are helpful to staff and are sometimes necessary for the parents. On the other, they are bringing in dangerous bacteria and are making the work of infection control professionals more difficult.

In fact, the original use-case for the disinfecting device was for a NICU. When our team approached a Hospital to find an application for our "UV machine" we were told about the cell phone ban in their NICU. The staff suggested that having a machine to disinfect the mobile phones would be a much more effective policy.

A nurse told us that she would often spend time policing parents and other staff members to put their phones away instead of doing something more valuable with her time.