


- [Home](#)
- [SF STAT!](#)
- [Current Articles](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Online Newspapers](#)
- [WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Video Interviews](#)
- [Contact](#)

Select Page

# South Miami Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Participates in Important Clinical Studies on Tiniest Infants


 February 18, 2021 – As the number of premature babies continues to rise in the United States, physician researchers at Baptist Health's South Miami Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are leading and participating in clinical studies that search for ways to improve care and decrease disabilities. The studies rarely available at community

hospital NICUs range from promising medication regimes that protect the brain from injury to an aerosol form of a drug that helps the lungs develop and prevents preterm infants from being placed on ventilators.

As part of the research program, Jorge Perez, M.D., medical director of the South Miami Hospital NICU and medical group Kidz Medical Services, has joined physicians from the University of Washington in Seattle, Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston, the University of Alabama at Birmingham and others in their quest to improve and save the lives of the tiniest patients. It is because of the NICU's expertise, large volume and multicultural patient population that their work is particularly valuable, Dr. Perez says.

"These very small babies are surviving today thanks to the many advances in technology, drug development and care that came as a result of earlier studies," says Dr. Perez. "The next step is to find ways to limit permanent disabilities and to provide innovative treatments that are better tolerated by our fragile patients."

The researchers recently published findings from the Preterm Erythropoietin Neuroprotection Trial (PENUT) in the Journal of Pediatrics. They have studied the drug erythropoietin (Epo), for its ability to reduce neurodevelopmental impairment, among other uses. Their paper, published in the Journal of Pediatrics, also shows that Epo did not cause additional kidney injury in extremely early babies — those born at 24 to 28 weeks of gestation.

With underdeveloped organs, 20 percent of babies born between 24 and 28 weeks of gestation typically die before leaving the hospital. Of the survivors, 20 percent have severe neurodevelopment impairment, while another 20 percent are moderately affected. Some of these lifelong problems include cerebral palsy, intellectual and physical disabilities, blindness and hearing problems. Full-term babies are born at 40 weeks; babies are considered preterm before 37 weeks. 

“Advancing medical science through these research projects not only helps babies, but also their families,” Dr. Perez says. “I am fortunate to be able to contribute to studies that may prevent a child from a lifetime of disability.”

In 2020, South Miami Hospital’s Center for Women & Infants earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval® for Pre-term Labor Certification and Prematurity Certification for the fourth time since 2013. South Miami Hospital is the only organization in Florida and one of the few in the nation to earn both designations, which reflect the commitment of providing safe and effective patient care that leads to the best patient outcomes.

#### About Baptist Health South Florida

Baptist Health South Florida is the largest healthcare organization in the region, with 11 hospitals, more than 23,000 employees, 4,000 physicians and 100 outpatient centers, urgent care facilities and physician practices spanning across Miami-Dade, Monroe, Broward and Palm Beach counties. Baptist Health has internationally renowned centers of excellence in cancer, cardiovascular care, orthopedics and sports medicine, and neurosciences. In addition, it includes Baptist Health Medical Group; Baptist Health Quality Network; and Baptist Health Care On Demand, a virtual health platform. A not-for-profit organization supported by philanthropy and committed to its faith-based charitable mission of medical excellence, Baptist Health has been recognized by Fortune as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For in America and by Ethisphere as one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies. For more information, visit [BaptistHealth.net/Newsroom](https://www.baptisthealth.net/newsroom) and connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report’s number one goal is top quality healthcare journalism written and edited for the region’s most successful, powerful healthcare business executives and professionals.

Phone : [561-368-6950](tel:561-368-6950)

Fax : [561-368-6978](tel:561-368-6978)

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Video News](#)
- [Datebook](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Contact](#)

Copyright © 2021 Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report.  
Site Designed By