

British doctors use inert gas to save baby

April 9 2010

(AP) -- British doctors say they have used an inert gas to prevent brain injury in a baby boy who was born in critical condition.

The treatment with xenon gas is experimental and has not been used elsewhere, the doctors at St. Michael's Hospital in Bristol said Friday.

When Riley Joyce was born recently, he couldn't breathe or maintain a pulse, and showed signs of [brain injury](#).

The doctors say they resuscitated him and used xenon gas to cool his brain to reduce the risk of permanent damage. [Xenon](#) is a rare, inert gas present in normal air.

Laboratory tests have shown it can double the protective effect of cooling the [brain](#).

After a week, Riley was alert and eating.

Doctors plan to use the gas on at least 12 babies before starting a bigger trial.

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Citation: British doctors use inert gas to save baby (2010, April 9) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-04-british-doctors-inert-gas-baby.html>

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