

Octopus for a Preemie

Cleveland Clinic Children's Fairview Hospital NICU

Thank you for showing interest in helping us create octopi for our smallest patients! The use of crochet octopus was first used in Neonatal Intensive Care Units in Denmark in 2013 under the name "Octo Project". These crochet octopi were made with tentacles that were meant to resemble the umbilical cord. Through anecdotal stories, the use of these octopi is believed to help neonates regulate vital signs, as seen through observation of vital signs by staff.

We will be using these for many of our infants and to be safe we will provide you with the requirements for materials and assembly as outlined below:

Materials must be:

- a. 100% Cotton Yarn.
- b. Poly Fill that can be washed in 140°F water.
- c. Free of any sewn-on items that could be choke hazards, i.e. Buttons, eyes, etc
 - i. You can add accessories that are also made of yarn and sewn on.
 - ii. You can add eyes by sewing/embroidering them on too.

We will wash them upon receiving them and distribute them to eligible patients in the NICU.

A sample crochet pattern is included below but you may also knit octopi as well or find a pattern that works best for you!

Thank you for your talent, kindness, and willingness to help bring some comfort to our NICU babies.



Crocheted Octopus MATERIALS:

- Crochet hook size 3.0 or 3.5 mm
- Cotton yarn (100 % cotton ONLY), cotton 8/4 or 8/8
- Stuffing: Fiber filling – must be washable at 60°C /140°F
- Tapestry needle
- Yarn snippers or scissors
- Stitch marker

Abbreviations:

Sc – single crochet	St – stitch
Sts - stitches	Ch – chain
Sc2tg – single crochet 2 together	Slst – slip stitch
yo- yarn over	** - Start and end repeat

How to sc2tg (decrease): Insert hook into stitch, yo, pull up a loop. Insert hook into next stitch, yo, pull up a loop. You should have 3 loops on your hook. Yo, and pull through all 3 loops.
You have just decreased from 2 stitches in the row below to 1 stitch in the row you are working on!

Here's a quick video on how to make a 'magic loop': <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/oAHzCK28hXM>

Body: working in continuous rounds

- 1 st round: 6 sc in a magic loop
- 2 nd round: 2 sc in each st (12 sts in total)
- 3 rd round: 2 sc in every other st, 1 sc in the other sts (18 sts in total)
- 4 th round: 2 sc in every 3rd st, 1 sc in all other sts (24 sts)
- 5 th round: 2 sc in every 4th st, 1 sc in all other sts (30 sts)
- 6 th round: 2 sc in every 5th st, 1 sc in all other stitches (36 sts)
- 7 th – 10th round: 1 sc in each st (36 sts each round)
- 11 th round: *1 sc in the first 4 st, sc2tg 5th and 6th st* repeat 5 x (30 sts remaining)
- 12 th round: 1 sc in each st (30 sts)
- 13 th round: *1 sc in each of 3 sts, sc2tg 4th and 5th st* repeat 5 x (24 sts remaining)
- 14 th round: 1 sc in each st (24 sts)
- 15 th round: *1 sc in first 2 sts, sc2tg 3rd and 4th st* repeat 5 x (18 sts remaining)
- 16 th round: 1 sc in each st (18 sts) **START STUFFING YOUR OCTO HERE!** *Leave a little room*
- 17 th round: *1 sc in first 7 sts, sc2tg 8th and 9th st * repeat once (16 sts remaining)
- 18 th round: 1 sc in each st (16 sts)

- 19 th round: **IN THE FRONT LOOP ONLY FOR THIS ENTIRE ROW, WE WILL MAKE THE TENTACLES:**
(*tip: put a stitch marker in the back loop of the 1st stitch. This will help you find your next row after the tentacles.*)

1 sc, chain 40, turn, starting in the 2nd chain from hook, 3 sc in each chain across. Attach tentacle to the body by making 1 sc in next FLO of row 19 repeat 7 x, making 8 tentacles.

- *The tentacles must not be longer than 22 centimeters when drawn out the longest, as they may be a choking hazard if longer.*

FILL YOUR OCTO BODY FIRMLY

- 20 th round: *sc2tg 1st and 2nd sts* (dec) in **each back loop of row 19** (8 sts)
- 21 st round: *sc2tg 1st and 2nd sts* (dec) repeat around (4 sts)

Finish off, leaving a long tail for sewing (about 6"). Feed your yarn tail through a darning needle and weave through the last 4 sc on the octo, creating a cinch close. Push your needle through the middle of the bottom of your octo and out the side of the body between any stitches. Insert your needle back into the body where your yarn is coming out of, then through another area of the octopus. Snip yarn flush with the octopus and squeeze to hid any excess.

Face/ Eyes: (optional)

You do not have to make the face if you do not want to. Our teams can do this for you. Otherwise, you can create eyes and mouth by embroidering with embroidery thread or black yarn.

Here are some videos on embroidering eyes and a smile:

[How to Embroider Eyes for Amigurumi | | | Crochet Basics | | Amigurumi Eyes | | Crochet Eyes](#)

[How to Embroider a Wide Smile on Amigurumi - YouTube](#)

Here is a simple pattern for regular white eyes with black pupils:

Crochet in white yarn, make 2 (or embroider the eyes as you like)

- ☐ 1 st round: 4 sc in a magic loop
- ☐ 2 nd round: 2 sc in each st (8 sts)
- ☐ 3 rd round: 2 sc in every other st, 1 sc in the other (12 sts)

End with a sl st, cut yarn and sew in ends. Embroider pupils with black thread

Questions or comments can be directed to Jessica Skiles or Jaclyn Thaxton via Facebook Messenger or email to yarnovercle@gmail.com

Designated Drop-off Time and Locations:

Parma- Snow Rd. Library on the 1st Sunday of every month from 2-4 pm. (please confirm on our events page) Conference Room A

Rocky River Public Library on the 1st Thursday of every month from 5:30 pm- 7:30 pm, lower level, Community Room.

North Olmsted Library on the 3rd Saturday of every month from 1-3 pm.

Chagrin Falls Library on the last Saturday of every month from 11am-1 pm.