

Learn About Breastfeeding

Take prenatal & breastfeeding classes at your local hospital and WIC clinic. Ask for books, DVD's, and other information on breastfeeding from the WIC breastfeeding coordinator, WIC peer counselor, lactation consultant or Nutritionist. The more you know about breastfeeding the easier it will be because you will know what to expect.

Plan to Exclusively Breastfeed

Exclusive breastfeeding means your baby will get only your breast milk and nothing else. It is important to only breastfeed for the first 4-6 weeks so you can establish a good milk supply. Starting with a good milk supply will make it easier to keep your supply if you plan to return to work or school and need to pump or combine formula feeding with breastfeeding.

*Remember, any amount of formula in the first month can decrease your milk supply.

Create a Support System

- Let your doctor know that you plan to breastfeed. Make sure he/she is supportive of breastfeeding.
- Help your family be supportive by sharing the books, DVD's, and information you have on breastfeeding. This is important if you don't have any family or friends that have ever breastfed. The more they learn about breastfeeding, the more comfortable they will be in helping you when the baby is here.
- Talk to family & friends about your plan to breastfeed and let them know how important it is to you and your baby to have their support.
- Ask to meet with a WIC peer counselor while you are pregnant. Peer counselors are WIC moms who breastfed their babies and who have been trained to help moms breastfeed. They can answer questions, offer comfort and encouragement to new moms.

If you have questions...

call your WIC peer counselor, breastfeeding coordinator, lactation consultant or doctor.

Name:

Phone:

Here is a list of materials you should receive from your WIC Peer Counselor:

- *Natural Nutrition: Breastfeed for the Best Start* brochure
- *5 Steps to a Good Latch* brochure
- Breastfeeding plan / Breastfeeding crib card
- Breastfeeding door hanger
- *Breastmilk Expression & Storage* brochure

www.scdhec.gov/breastfeeding



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a new mother's guide to
breastfeeding
in the **hospital**

natural**Nutrition**

breastfeeding success in the hospital

What to expect and how to make your hospital experience memorable

Plan for the Hospital

Though you can't guarantee your birth experience to be exactly the way you want it, planning ahead and letting your care givers, family and friends know your wants & needs can make the event more enjoyable and breastfeeding successful.

Limit Visitors

Usually, your stay in the hospital after giving birth is not a very long one. Plan to limit your visitors while in the hospital. By doing this, you will cut down on distractions and have plenty of time for breastfeeding. Your baby will be nursing every 2-3 hours. Too many visitors may overwhelm you and your baby during this special time of getting to know each other.

Tips to limit visitors:

- Ask them to call instead of visit or wait to visit once you and the baby are home.
- Tell them they may not be able to stay long if you need to breastfeed the baby soon after they arrive.
- Tell family and friends you will be allowing limited visitors or no visitors at all. You can give the hospital staff a list of people you will allow to visit or request no visitors. They will honor your request and help you keep visitors to a minimum.

Rooming In

Keep your baby in the same room with you at all times. This will help you learn your baby's hunger cues. Feeding your baby at the first signs of hunger will calm him and let him know he is safe in this big new world.

Early Hunger Cues:

- Licks or smacks lips
- Opens & closes mouth
- Rooting
- Sucking on fingers or hand

If your baby has to leave the room for a bath, shots, blood test, or any other procedure, you can send your partner or another family member to calm him. You can ask if the procedures can be done in your room to decrease the number of times your baby is away from you.

Get an Early Breastfeeding Start

For the first hour or two after delivery, your baby will be alert and willing to breastfeed. Tell your care givers you want to breastfeed your baby within the first 30 minutes to 1 hour after he is born. If you have a c-section delivery, tell the staff you want to begin breastfeeding as soon as possible. **If your baby has a hard time sucking or latching on to your breast, ask for help right away!** The sooner you start breastfeeding the more successful you will be.

Avoid Bottles & Pacifiers

Bottles and pacifiers can keep you from having a good milk supply. They can also cause nipple confusion. Babies suck differently on a bottle or pacifier than at your breast. All of your baby's suckling in the first few weeks should be at your breast.

Just one bottle of formula in the first month:

- Can reduce your breast milk supply
- Can start you on the path of weaning from the breast
- Lessens the protective effect of your breast milk on your baby
- Can increase your baby's risk to having allergies and being sick.

Practice Skin to Skin Care

Skin to skin care is when you hold your baby dressed only in a diaper and cap against your bare skin. You can use a blanket to cover your baby's back. Skin to skin should begin immediately after your baby is born and then done as often as possible while in the hospital. **Skin to skin care is the best thing you can do for breastfeeding success.** Some babies go into a very deep sleep about 2 hours after delivery and can be hard to wake for the first 24 hours. Skin to skin care will often wake a baby and encourage him to breastfeed.

See the Lactation Consultant

Even if you think breastfeeding is going well, you can still ask to see the Lactation Consultant. She can check and see how the baby is positioned and how well he is nursing. The right position and a good latch can prevent soreness and other breastfeeding problems. Plus it is a great time to ask what kind of support the hospital offers after you are discharged home.

If your baby is unable to breastfeed for any reason, it is important to begin pumping within 6 hours of delivery with a **good** electric breast pump. The lactation consultant can help you get the right kind of pump and help with using an electric breast pump.

Infant Feeding Plan

An infant feeding plan is a written plan of your wishes for feeding your baby. You will want to complete your plan with family and then give it to your doctors, nurses or hospital staff. You can even ask the hospital staff to attach the plan to your chart. Give the crib card to hospital staff and have them attach it to the baby's crib. This is a great reminder that you want to exclusively breastfeed.

WIC can provide you with a breastfeeding plan to tell caregivers and hospital staff your wishes for breastfeeding your baby. Fill out the plan and give it to your doctor, hospital staff, family, friends or anyone that will be involved with you and your baby while you're in the hospital.

