



Breastfeeding Your Baby in Hospital

Trust your instincts

You are experienced in the care of your child and can help in his/her care. Children recover faster and with fewer problems when cared for by parents.

Prepare yourself

Find out about breastfeeding support on the ward that can help you while your child is in hospital.



Questions and Answers

"When and how often should I breastfeed in the hospital?"

Stay as close to the normal home routine as possible. Each day, staff should discuss with you any tests and treatments. Together arrangements can be made for a feeding (or expressing) pattern that best suits the situation.

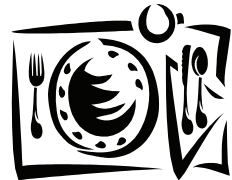
"What about measuring the baby's intake?"



The number of wet nappies is a good indication if the baby has enough fluid. Sometimes it is necessary to measure how much milk the baby is taking. Electronic scales can be used to weigh the baby before and after a feed. There is no need to feed from a bottle to measure the amount.

"What about caring for me?"

Ask the staff about meals and drinks. You are the baby's source of food, so good nutrition is important for breastfeeding as well as keeping you healthy.



"They want me to stop breastfeeding overnight before surgery or so a test can be done. What do I do about my milk and how do I get them to let me nurse?"

Young babies can be hungry in two or three hours, so overnight can be a long time. Sometimes parents are told "nothing after midnight" although surgery can be scheduled from 7 a.m. all the way up until the afternoon. Ask for the most likely time of the surgery or test, so that a realistic fasting time can be agreed upon. If the baby is unable to feed for more than 3-4 hours, express your milk to stay comfortable and keep up your supply.

"They say they want me to keep breastfeeding, but then so many people come to do things that I cannot settle the baby to nurse and I have no chance to rest!"

You might agree with staff to place signs on the door when you want privacy to nurse or express your milk without interruption. You can also help by asking that some routines (such as ward rounds) be made clear to you so that you do not start feeding just before them.

