



Care procedures

Promotion of breastfeeding

Frauenfelder O, Oude-Reimer M, Camba F, Ceccatelli M, Hankes-Drielsma I, Jørgensen E, Silva E

Statement of the standard

Infants are **exclusively** fed with **human milk** during their hospital stay and mothers are supported to **exclusively breastfeed** after discharge.



For parents and family

- All pregnant women and their partners are informed by healthcare professionals about the benefits of breastfeeding.
- Parents are informed and guided by healthcare professionals before or directly after birth on how to breastfeed and express, how to maintain lactation, and the importance of early skin-to-skin care and breastfeeding immediately after delivery, where possible.



For neonatal unit

- A unit guideline on breastfeeding and expression including transition from non-nutritive to nutritive sucking is available and regularly updated.
- Appropriate facilities to support the expression of mother's milk are available.
- Training on the importance of breastfeeding and how to encourage and guide mothers to breastfeed and express is provided.
- Lactation consultants are available to support breastfeeding for parents and healthcare professionals.



For hospitals

- Training on the importance of breastfeeding and how to encourage and guide mothers to breastfeed and express is ensured.
- Appropriate facilities to support the expression of mother's milk are available, including private rooms/ space for breastfeeding and expressing milk.
- Accreditation by the WHO Baby friendly hospital initiative (BFHI) is in place.

Benefits

Short-term benefits

- Improved growth and neurodevelopment
- Reduced risk of necrotising enterocolitis and late-onset sepsis
- Improved mother-infant bonding
- Reduced neonatal mortality and infections in term infants

Long-term benefits

- Reduced risk for overweight or obesity
- Reduced risk of mortality due to diarrhoea and other infections
- Improved intelligence tests and higher school attendance
- Improved child development and reduced health costs
- Reduced risk of breast cancer following a period of breastfeeding
- Improved confidence and mental health for mothers



For healthcare professionals

- A unit guideline on breastfeeding and expression including transition from non-nutritive to nutritive sucking is adhered to by all responsible healthcare professionals.
- Training on the importance of breastfeeding and how to encourage and guide mothers to breastfeed and express is attended by all responsible healthcare professionals.
- All infants are placed in direct skin-to-skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth for at least an hour, where possible, to encourage oxytocin release and establish initial feeding.
- Newborn infants receive no other milk than human milk, unless medically indicated for at least 24 hours after birth.
- Breastfeeding is encouraged on demand unless medically indicated.
- Bottles are not offered to preterm infants whose mothers wish to breastfeed unless the mother has given permission and alternative methods of feeding have been discussed.



For health service

- A national guideline on breastfeeding and expression is available and regularly updated.
- Post discharge support regarding breastfeeding is provided.

