

Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

This facility upholds the World Health Organization/UNICEF Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, published in a joint statement entitled, Protecting, Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding: The Special Role of Maternity Services

Every facility providing maternity services and care for newborn infants should:

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in the skills necessary to implement this policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their infants.
6. Give infants no food or drink other than breast-milk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice rooming-in – allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or birth center.

The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding form the basis of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, a worldwide breastfeeding quality improvement project created by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers also uphold the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes by offering parents support, education, and educational materials that promote the use of human milk rather than other infant food or drinks, and by refusing to accept or distribute free or subsidized supplies of breast milk substitutes, nipples, and other feeding devices.