

# Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

World Health Organization & UNICEF, 1989

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 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 should be separated from their infants.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, 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 artificial teats or pacifiers to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breast-feeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

The 10 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 and the United Nations Children's Fund.

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

St. Mary Medical Center 

ST. JOSEPH  
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