

## Breastfeeding

### Information for parents

#### Introduction

Alder Hey promotes breastfeeding as the healthiest way for a woman to feed her baby and recognises the important health benefits known to exist for both the mother and her infant.

Being in hospital can be stressful and Alder Hey is committed to providing an environment that encourages breastfeeding and to supporting you to breastfeed your baby. You are welcome to breastfeed anywhere in the hospital but if you require a private room or a privacy sign then please ask staff. Just like any new skill, breastfeeding takes time and practice and at times can be challenging. This leaflet has been written to give you basic information you may need to support you in feeding your baby whilst in Alder Hey. If you have any further questions or needs, then please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff.

#### Breastfeeding Facilities in Alder Hey

Private breastfeeding rooms are available in the Atrium, on medical day case corridor, outpatients 1.2 and 2.1 and the Emergency Department. There is also a private room outside critical care if your baby is a patient there.

#### Ronald MacDonald House

**Reception is staffed 24 hours a day and a pump can be signed out for an hour, maximum.** If you are storing your milk there overnight, you will be given a plastic tub to keep in your fridge compartment. Please secure lids to prevent spillages. Please remember to take packs and labels from the ward where your baby is and take milk to the ward fridge as soon as you can. Do not put your milk in the freezer, bring it to the ward to freeze if necessary. Do not store your milk in bags, only use bottles. You may be able to borrow a mini fridge to store your milk in your room so ask at reception if you think you would benefit from one.

#### Benefits

Every day makes a difference to your baby and the longer you breastfeed, the longer the protection lasts. Here are some of the benefits of breastfeeding or giving your baby breastmilk:

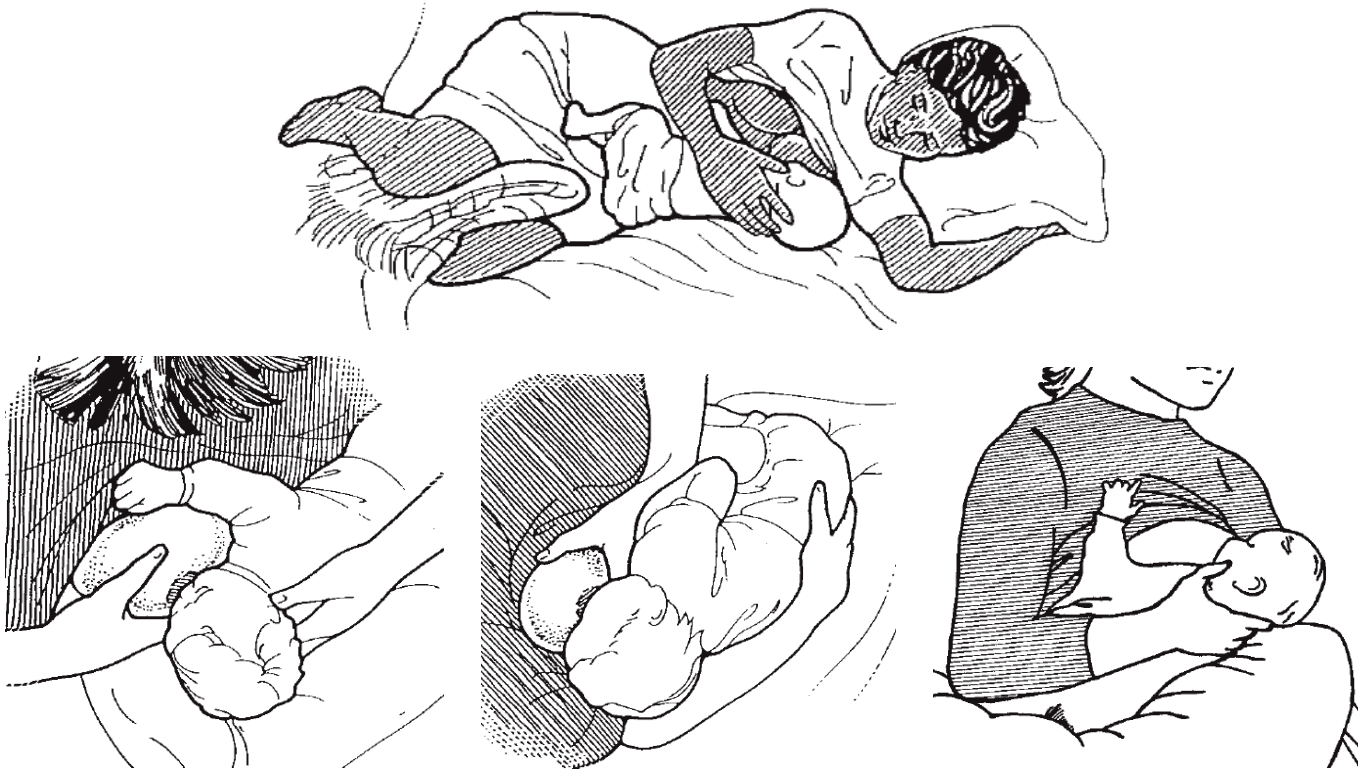
- Breastfeeding helps protect a baby from infectious illnesses including gastroenteritis and respiratory infections. It can reduce the incidence and the severity of urinary infections, ear infections, eczema and allergies.
- Breastfeeding helps build a strong bond between mother and baby both physically and emotionally.
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of cot death (sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) by more than a third.
- Breast milk can also provide pain relief.
- Breast feeding releases hormones that can help maintain mum's mental health.
- Breastfeeding also helps a mother to feel they are providing care to her infant even when they are poorly and are mainly being cared for by nursing and medical teams.
- Breastfeeding is free!

See also: UNICEF link to evidence for breastfeeding preventing child deaths:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/lancet-increasing-breastfeeding-worldwide-prevent-800000-child-deaths-every-year/>

## How to Breastfeed

Make sure you are in a comfortable position to begin with. The main positions are pictured below:



See also: UNICEF leaflet Breastfeeding Your Baby - Important information for new mothers at:

<https://www.hpac.nhs.uk/HPAC/ClickCounter?action=d&resourceId=93051&url='uploads/hplincoln/pdf/Breastfeeding%20english.pdf'>

It is important to position and attach your baby correctly to help your baby get to your milk supply and to help prevent engorgement and painful nipples;

**Close** – hold your baby close to you

**Head** – make sure your baby's head is free to tilt back and can lead with the chin

**In line** – make sure your baby's head and body are aligned so neck is not twisted

**Nose to nipple** – so nipple slips under top lip upwards and backwards to roof of mouth

## Signs that your baby is attached and feeding well

- Your baby should be settled
- Your baby should have a large mouthful of breast in their mouth when feeding.
- Your baby's chin should be firmly touching your breast.
- It shouldn't hurt you when your baby feeds (although the first few sucks may feel strong).
- Your baby's cheeks should stay rounded during sucking.
- Your baby should take rhythmically long sucks and swallows. It is normal for your baby to pause from time to time.
- Your baby should finish the feed and come off the breast naturally.
- Your breasts will usually feel softer post feed

See also: Start4Life Breastfeeding <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/breastfeeding>

## Feeding Cues

Breastfeeding is a reciprocal relationship between you and your baby. Look for cues that your baby is wanting a feed for example:

- Rooting for the breast
- Sucking on fingers and hands
- Rapid eye movements

You may find your breasts feel full or you need to cuddle your baby when you need to feed.

## Bottle Feeding

If you choose to bottle feed, then paced feeding is the safest method and doing this as responsively as possible will help build close and loving relationships and help reduce overfeeding and related issues. Ask your nurse for our Paced Feeding Information leaflet.

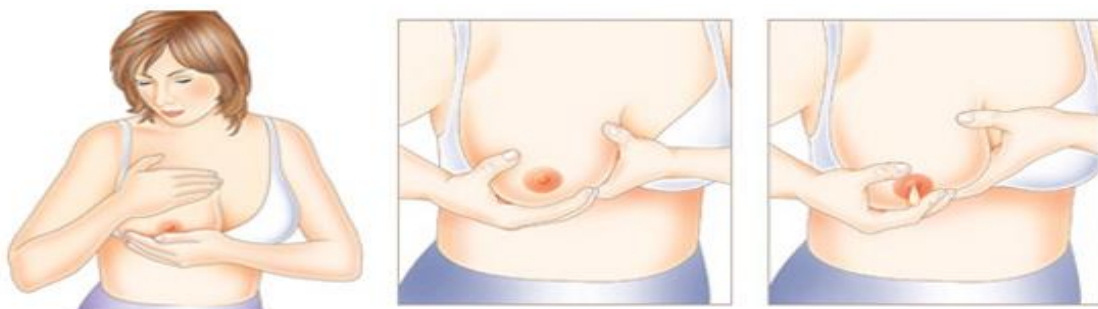
## Expressing

You may decide that the best way for you to feed your baby is with expressed breast milk (we refer to this as EBM) or for medical reasons your baby may not be able to feed directly from the breast. We will help you with this. You can either hand express or express using an electric breast pump, which we will provide. Ask for a privacy sign if you prefer. An expressing log is included at the back of this leaflet to help you to remember when you last expressed. It is advisable to express 8-10 times in 24 hours and to do one expressing session overnight as your milk hormones usually peak between 2 and 4 AM.

## Hand Expressing

This is good for expressing colostrum (your first milk). Even a few drops are beneficial to your baby and can be used for mouth care. To do this;

- Wash hands and get into comfortable position
- Gently massage your breasts to stimulate your milk let down (when milk comes out of breast)
- Using your thumb and rest of your fingers to make a C shape gently push back against breast wall and squeeze down
- Gently squeeze and release building up a rhythm
- When the milk flow stops move to a different section of the breast
- Collect milk in a sterile bottle which we will provide or draw off with syringe
- Repeat on the other breast



## Expressing Using an Electric Pump

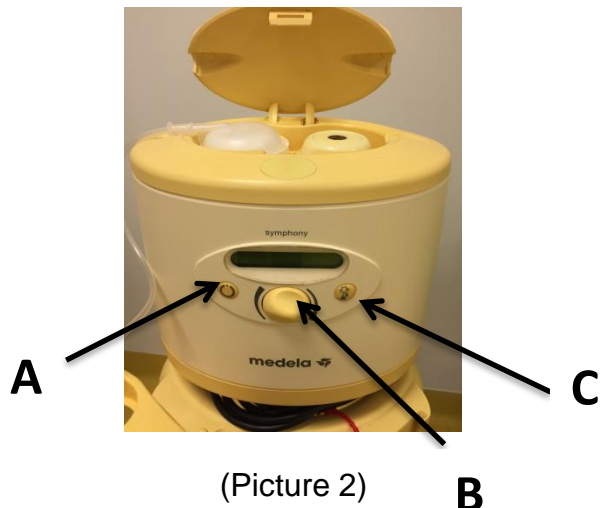
Medela Symphony Pumps and breast milk packs are available on all wards. It is recommended to express breast milk while beside your baby to increase milk supply, but if you wish to express in the private breastfeeding rooms, then take the pump and packs from the ward and return them when you are finished. **Take a picture or video** of your baby with you, or something with their smell on as this helps with milk supply. Ask your nurse for some gauze to use as bonding squares. Put some in your bra and some near baby and swap them regularly – this can help your supply by boosting your hormones.

After each use the pack is to be disposed in the yellow clinical waste bins. **Packs are not to be re-used or sterilised.** For infection control reasons we ask that you do not use your own pump unless our packs are compatible. You can single or double pump depending on preference, but if you are struggling with your supply or trying to initiate feeding it is advisable to **double pump**.

- Wash hands and get into comfortable position. Sit well forward to prevent leakage from the collecting set
- Assemble pack as in picture 1, and attach to pump as picture 2
- If your supply is already established (expressing 20 mls combined for 3 consecutive pumping sessions) then use the **maintenance programme**. Place the nipple shield central to nipple ensuring a good seal and turn pump on as (A). Then turn middle dial (B) clockwise up to slight discomfort and then reduce anti-clockwise to a comfortable level. The pump will do fast sucks for 2 minutes to stimulate your let down of milk. Once you see milk, press the droplet button as (C) and the pump will slow down. Once your milk flow slows you can press the droplet button again to try and stimulate another let down and press it again to slow it down once you see milk. It should take no longer than 15 minutes each expressing session
- If your baby is up to 6 days old or you are struggling with milk supply, then use the initiate programme. Place nipple shield central to nipple ensuring a good seal and turn pump on as (A). Immediately press (B) and the pump will do an automatic 15 minute programme of fast pumping, slow pumping and pauses



(Picture 1)



(Picture 2)

## Labelling and Storage

You will be given pre-printed milk labels to complete with the date and time you expressed. Give your milk to a member of staff for storage. Milk can be stored in our fridge for **24 hours** and in our freezer for **3 months**. Your milk can be kept at room temperature for 4 hours. **Freezer bags cannot be used for storage in hospital.**

On discharge, please make sure you have a freezer pack if you want to take your milk home. Milk should be transported immediately to home fridge / freezer. If a cold environment has not been maintained, then milk must be discarded. Any milk left behind will be discarded.

## Home loan pumps

We have a small number of home loan pumps for mums who are not able to stay with their baby. You must fulfil the criteria for this and if you loan one this must be returned before discharge or if it is no longer required. If you require more information, ask your nurse to do a referral to the Breastfeeding Nurse.

## Breast Pump Rental

Medela offer the Symphony Breast Pump for rental to mums. To hire a pump please call Medela on 0161 776 0400 and quote code NICU 35.

## Non-Nutritive Sucking

If a baby is nil by mouth, non-nutritive sucking at the breast can take place after breasts have been fully emptied using a breast pump (see previous guidance). Your baby's medical/**surgical** team should be consulted before non-nutritive sucking takes place. Place baby to the breast and allow the baby to attach to the breast for comfort. This procedure can be used when a baby is receiving expressed breast milk via a nasogastric tube to ensure their sucking pattern is maintained.

## Skin to Skin Contact (Kangaroo Care)

Skin to skin contact is beneficial for the mother and infant to encourage a good supply of breast milk as much as possible. Putting baby near to your nipple even if they are not actively feeding can provide comfort to both you and baby and assist with bonding.

Although your baby may be too sick to breastfeed, place them close to your nipple and let them nuzzle you so they can smell your milk.

Close contact with your baby also stimulates your breasts to make more milk. Skin to skin contact will help boost your milk production, especially if your baby is held near to your breast. To practice skin to skin care, your baby should be placed in their nappy only onto your chest, skin to skin. You can do this under a loose shirt or nightdress, so they can be snuggled inside your clothing.

## Looking After Yourself

If you choose to breastfeed your baby or feed with breast milk, you may need additional support and reassurance from Alder Hey staff. We understand that being in hospital is stressful, but try and get as much rest as possible.

## Diet

During breastfeeding you need a healthy diet to provide for your own needs as well as those of your baby. It is important that you drink between 2 and 3 litres of fluids per day, so please ask staff for jugs of water / juice and help yourself to hot drinks. If you are on a ward you will be given breakfast and will be asked to choose from a set menu for lunch and dinner. **You will only be given meals if you are resident with your baby and your baby is up to 6 months old.** Only breastfeeding mums on the following wards will be given a voucher to eat in the treetops restaurant; 1C, ED, EDU and Critical Care. This voucher entitles mum to cereal and/or toast for breakfast and a hot or cold meal at lunch and dinner time plus a hot drink with meals. At weekends, please ask for 2 vouchers at lunch time and get a snack for dinner as the restaurant closes at 2pm.



## Smoking

Your breast milk will contain nicotine if you smoke and is not advised whilst breastfeeding. However, the benefits of breastfeeding for smokers are still greater than formula feeding. Smoking increases the risk of cot death (sudden unexpected death in infancy - SUDI) regardless of feeding method. Smoking only after feeding and away from the baby will limit the baby's exposure. For support and advice for quitting smoking see your GP. For further information about smoking and breastfeeding see:

<https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/dibm/smoking%20and%20smoking%20cessation.pdf>

## Medications

It is very important that you tell your baby's nurse / pharmacist about any medications you plan or are taking. Most medications are safe to take when breastfeeding. However, we need to be aware of medications so they will not be transmitted to your baby in their breast milk. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are safe to take. Codeine is no longer recommended as routine medication for breastfeeding mothers. The use of antibiotics does not require the suspension of breastfeeding. Recreational drug use is not recommended whilst breastfeeding. Using recreational drugs increases the risk of cot death (sudden unexpected death in infancy - SUDI) regardless of feeding method.

It is recommended that all lactating mothers take a vitamin D supplement unless your baby is receiving 500mls per day of formula: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-advice-on-supplements-for-at-risk-groups>.

## Comfortable Bra

It may help to wear a comfortable bra as your breasts will need extra support during this time. Underwired bras should not be worn as they can damage the tender breast tissue and may cause blocked milk ducts which can result in mastitis.

## Midwife Visits

The Midwife visits the Trust every Wednesday (Outpatients level 2.1). If you require an appointment then please text the midwife before 12pm on Wednesday on 07971985939. She will then call you with an appointment time. If you need to see a midwife on other weekdays then ring Sycamore Midwifery Team on 0151 702 4175 or 0151 702 4177 and leave a message. The team will return your call. For all out of hours emergencies please ring Liverpool Women's Hospital on 0151 708 9988 and ask to speak to a midwife. **Our** midwife will only see post-natal mum's up until your baby is 28 days old. Do not take your baby to the visit.

## GP Appointments

If you do not live local you can either do an econsult/phone consultation with your own GP or register as a temporary resident at Knotty Ash Medical Centre on 0151 228 4369.

## Breastfeeding Problems

Whilst breastfeeding your baby you may come across some common problems. We will support you to feed your baby whilst they are resolved, so please let us know.

## Engorgement

Your breasts may be distended and may feel hot and tender. To relieve this, make sure your baby is attached and feeding effectively and that you are feeding or expressing frequently. Massage can relieve the discomfort as can applying hot / cold compresses and taking regularly pain killers.

## Mastitis

This can feel the same as engorgement, but you may also have a temperature and have flu like symptoms and may have a red hardened area on the affected breast. The milk ducts become blocked, and you may develop an abscess. Manage this as above for engorgement, although hand expressing is particularly helpful as it can target the affected area. You must seek medical advice if the symptoms persist over 24 hours as you could need antibiotics.

## Sore / Cracked Nipples

Sore / cracked nipples can present with redness, bleeding, blisters, wedge shaped nipples post feeds and your baby may even vomit blood. You can manage this by ensuring correct attachment, effective feeding and taking analgesia. Changing feeding position can help, as can applying some of your expressed milk to the area. 'Over the counter' creams can be useful, but just check in case they need removing before feeds.

## Support Groups

Information and contact numbers for local / voluntary breastfeeding support groups, peer support service and counsellors is available by visiting [www.amazingbreastmilk.nhs.uk](http://www.amazingbreastmilk.nhs.uk) or by calling the National Breastfeeding Helpline on 0300 100 0212.

The Breast Start app and Baby Buddy app are also useful tools. You are welcome to access any external services whilst you are an inpatient also.

The following Support Groups are available:

Liverpool BAMBIS - 0151 233 6874 or facebook: Liverpool Community Bambis

Knowsley Bosom Buddies - 0151 244 3269 or [www.knowsleyccns.co.uk](http://www.knowsleyccns.co.uk)

Sefton Breastfeeding Support - 0151 291 8010 or facebook: Breastfeeding Support Sefton

If your baby was delivered at the Liverpool Women's Hospital and is up to 6 weeks old you can call their Infant Feeding Helpline on 0151 702 4293 and arrange an appointment if required.

Whiston Hospital holds an infant feeding clinic for babies of any age. Ring -0151 290 4166 for information.

## References

1. Bliss (2002) The Best Start, A guide to expressing and breastfeeding your premature baby. <https://www.cuh.nhs.uk/rosie-links-leaflets/best-start-guide-expressing-and-breastfeeding-your-premature-baby>
2. World Health Organisation (1998). Evidence for the Ten Steps to Successful breastfeeding. Geneva. [http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/evidence\\_ten\\_step\\_eng.pdf](http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/evidence_ten_step_eng.pdf)
3. Department of Health (2012), Off to the best start. Important information about feeding your baby. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/leaflets-and-posters/off-to-the-best-start/>
4. World Health Organisation (2014) [http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive\\_breastfeeding/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive_breastfeeding/en/)
5. The Breastfeeding Network (2013), Introduction to the safety of drugs passing through breast milk <https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp->

[content/dibm/introduction%20to%20the%20safety%20of%20drugs%20passing%20through%20breastmilk.pdf](https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN_how_safe_is_leaflet_2009.pdf)

6. The Breastfeeding Network (2009) Smoking and Breastfeeding  
[https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN\\_how\\_safe\\_is\\_leaflet\\_2009.pdf](https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN_how_safe_is_leaflet_2009.pdf)
7. Miller, C. (2012) Marijuana use and breastfeeding. Clinical Lactation 2012, Vol. 3-3, pp102-107.  
<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/springer/clac/2012/00000003/00000003/art00004?crawler=true&mimetype=application/pdf>
8. UNICEF Guide to the Baby Friendly Initiative Standards  
<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/>

This fact sheet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust  
Eaton Road  
Liverpool  
L12 2AP  
0151 228 4811  
[www.alderhey.nhs.uk](http://www.alderhey.nhs.uk)

**URO PAR/F/1 ©Alder Hey 2018 Next review date: May 2025**

**PIAG 037**





