

# Information Sheet

## Breastfeeding

If more information is required please don't hesitate to ask your Midwife, Doctor or Maternal & Child Health Nurse

**This information sheet has been designed to help you understand some of the breastfeeding topics that will be discussed with you during your pregnancy by your midwife or doctor.**

**Your midwife or doctor will also talk to you about your plans around breastfeeding and your previous breastfeeding experiences.**

**If you are planning to formula feed your baby from birth, the midwives will discuss with you what you need to bring into hospital and how to get started including formula preparation and storage in hospital.**

### What are the benefits of breastfeeding for my baby?

Your breast milk is the perfect food for your baby. It helps to protect your baby against gastroenteritis and diarrhoea, ear and chest infections, allergies and diabetes amongst other conditions.

### What are the benefits of breastfeeding for me?

Breastfeeding reduces the risk of bleeding after birth, helps you return to pre-pregnancy weight, is convenient and costs nothing. Breastfeeding also helps protect you against breast and ovarian cancer, and osteoporosis.

### What is the importance of uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact and the first breastfeed after birth?

Keeping your baby with you promotes a feeling of closeness, which produces a strong hormonal response and is linked to higher breastfeeding success and longer breastfeeding duration.

After your baby is born he/she will start to seek your breast for a breastfeed. We will help you recognize the signs that your baby is ready to feed such as licking, sucking, putting their hand to their mouth, making soft noises. After a caesarean birth, it is possible to have skin-to-skin contact in the theatre suite or in recovery if both mother and baby are well.

### How do I get position and attachment right?

Your breasts are soft in the first few days before your milk changes from highly nutritious colostrum to mature milk.

This time allows you and your baby an opportunity to learn and practice good positioning and attachment. This will help avoid nipple pain and ensure your baby receives the most milk.

**Breastfeeding is a learned skill that takes time, patience and practice.**

### What is demand feeding?

Demand feeding means feeding your baby when they want to be fed.

It is common for babies to breastfeed 8 to 12 times in 24 hours, whilst breastfeeding is being established – this is very normal and will settle with time.

### What is rooming in & does BRHS support it?

At BRHS we support you to keep your baby in your room with you all the time. Keeping your baby with you helps you to recognise when your baby is hungry, tired or needs a cuddle.

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### Using teats, dummies and complementary feeds...

Your young baby is learning to breastfeed and can become confused if offered a teat or dummy before they have learnt to breastfeed well.

Offering fluids other than breastmilk will decrease the time your baby breastfeeds, which will reduce your breastmilk supply.

Frequent unrestricted suckling at the breast will satisfy your baby.

### How long is exclusive breastfeeding recommended for and why?

When babies are exclusively breastfed they need no other food or drink until at least 6 months of age.

You can be confident that your baby is receiving enough breast milk when :

- You see six or more heavy wet nappies and at least one bowel action a day in the early weeks
- Your baby is gaining weight
- Your baby is bright and alert and usually settles after most feeds.

### Who can I contact for more information and advice?

1. **Your Midwife or Midwifery team member**  
Midwifery Unit (Hospital): **5150 3455**  
CBD Clinic: **5150 3300**
2. **Your local General Practitioner**
3. **Maternal and Child Health Centre**  
Bairnsdale: **5152 0052**
4. **Australian Breastfeeding association**  
Breastfeeding Helpline: **1800 686 268**  
Web: **www.breastfeeding.asn.au**



### REFERENCES

The Royal Women's Hospital:  
[www.thewomens.org.au/Breastfeeding](http://www.thewomens.org.au/Breastfeeding)  
[www.babyfriendly.org.uk/](http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk/)  
The World Health Organisation /UNICEF

We welcome feedback at:

**Bairnsdale Regional Health Service** PO Box 474 Bairnsdale VIC 3875  
P (03) 5150 3333 F (03) 5152 6784 E [email@brhs.com.au](mailto:email@brhs.com.au) [www.brhs.com.au](http://www.brhs.com.au)

The information in this brochure is intended as a guide to one of the services provided by BRHS and is correct at the time of publishing This brochure was based on information from King Edward Memorial Hospital "Formula Feeding "(2014).

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**Bairnsdale Regional Health Service is located on the traditional land of the Gunaikurnai people.**