



## **Before Your Baby is Born**

### **Learn About Breastfeeding**

*Find breastfeeding information and resources.*

- Take a breastfeeding or prenatal class at your local hospital or WIC clinic.
- Ask your WIC staff about helpful tips and support they can give you.
- Call your health insurance to learn what breastfeeding help and supplies they cover – most plans, including Medicaid, now provide breast pumps!

### **Create a Support System**

- Talk to your doctor, family, friends, and job about your plan to breastfeed.
- Choose a **Baby-Friendly™** hospital or birthing center for strong breastfeeding support. Visit [babyfriendlyusa.org](http://babyfriendlyusa.org).
- Meet with a **WIC breastfeeding peer counselor** during your pregnancy for guidance and encouragement.



## **Breastfeeding Resources:**

### **WIC Breastfeeding Information**

[dph.sc.gov/wicbreastfeeding](http://dph.sc.gov/wicbreastfeeding)

### **La Leche League International**

[l.li.org/breastfeeding-info](http://l.li.org/breastfeeding-info)

### **Hug Your Baby SC**

#### **Digital Parent Resources**

[hugyourbaby.org/scwic](http://hugyourbaby.org/scwic)

### **Free Online**

#### **Saturday Breastfeeding Class**

[hugyourbaby.org/parenting101](http://hugyourbaby.org/parenting101)

### **South Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition**

[scbreastfeeds.org/parents](http://scbreastfeeds.org/parents)

### **Global Health Media**

#### **Educational Breastfeeding Videos**

[globalhealthmedia.org/video/?\\_s=Breastfeeding&-1](http://globalhealthmedia.org/video/?_s=Breastfeeding&-1)



Women, Infants & Children  
SOUTH CAROLINA



SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

# **a mother's guide to successful breastfeeding**



# At the Hospital

## Plan to Breastfeed Exclusively

Inform your doctor and hospital staff that you want to feed your baby only breast milk.

- Staff will help you have a successful breastfeeding start.

## Practice Skin-to-Skin Contact

Begin giving your baby uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact as soon as possible after birth!

- Holding your baby skin-to-skin helps calm, warm, and comfort them.
- Place your diapered baby on your bare chest for at least one hour after birth - and as often as you like.
- You can do skin-to-skin after a C-section, too.

*Your family and partner can do skin-to-skin contact, too!*

## Begin Breastfeeding as Soon as Possible After Delivery.

Hold your baby skin-to-skin as soon as possible. This helps your baby find your breast and start feeding naturally.

***Skin-to-skin contact is the best thing you can do for breastfeeding success!***

- Your baby will self-attach and feed for the first time.
- Your first milk, called colostrum, is rich in nutrients and protects your baby from illness.
- You'll make small amounts of milk at first to match your baby's tiny stomach. Your milk will increase and become mature milk in 3-5 days.

***Newborns eat small amounts often—aim to breastfeed 8 or more times in 24 hours.***

### Note:

If separated from your baby after delivery, start expressing your milk within 6 hours. Use your hands or a pump every 2-3 hours (8-12 times a day) to build your supply.

## Keep Your Baby in Your Room

Rooming-in helps you learn the cues that your baby uses to communicate with you.

- When ready to eat, your baby will show **hunger cues**:
  - Hands near mouth
  - Rooting (looking for the nipple)
  - Sucking sounds or lip smacking
- When ready to stop feeding, your baby will show **fullness cues**:
  - Falling asleep
  - Pushing away from your breast
  - Slower or no sucking

Feed your baby as soon as you see hunger cues. Don't wait for crying—it can make feeding harder.

## Limit Your Visitors

Too many visitors can overwhelm you and your baby.

- Limit your visitors at the hospital to prevent distractions, leaving more time for skin-to-skin contact, feeding, and bonding with your baby.

*You will have plenty of time for visitors at home.*

## Avoid Bottles and Pacifiers

Your baby's suckling at the breast in the first few weeks helps build a good milk supply.

- Using bottles or pacifiers too soon can affect your milk supply. Wait until breastfeeding is well established.
- If needed, use a spoon or syringe to feed expressed milk or formula instead of a bottle.

## Request Breastfeeding Support

Request to see the lactation staff while in the hospital.

- A breastfeeding expert can help with latching, positioning, and recognizing your baby's cues—even if things are going well.
- If your baby isn't latching or sucking well, ask for help right away.

### Note:

Before you leave the hospital, you may be offered birth control. Choose a method that's compatible with breastfeeding, as some types can affect your milk supply.

# At Home

***Remember to Ask for Help Early and Often!***

## Use Hospital Breastfeeding Support

Some hospitals offer breastfeeding support services after you go home.

- Find out the breastfeeding services that the hospital offers and get help if needed.

## Get Help from WIC

WIC breastfeeding experts can answer your infant feeding questions.

- Contact your WIC office and let them know your baby was born. They are ready to provide support and referrals as needed.

## Involve Family and Friends

After birth, you'll need time to rest, heal, and adjust. While you and your baby get used to your new life together, ask family and friends to help you with:

- Meals
- Baby care while you rest or shower
- Household chores
- Watching older children
- Emotional support

***Learning to breastfeed takes time. Be patient!***

