

Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative

Information for Consumers

The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) was launched in 1991 by the World Health Organisation and the United Nations Children's Fund to Assist all hospitals to become centres of breastfeeding support.

Breastfeeding lays a foundation for good health in infancy, childhood and into adult life. Maternity hospitals have a special role in supporting the establishment of breastfeeding.

BFHI has been adopted in many countries around the world. Where hospitals have been designated as baby friendly, the standard of care for all mothers and babies has been raised, more mothers are breastfeeding their babies, and child health has improved as a result.

Staff at baby friendly hospitals provide assistance to breastfeeding mothers by adopting practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding. Staff also ensure that mothers who decide not to breastfeed are provided with information and support.

A baby friendly hospital adopts the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (see overleaf), whilst providing good care before, during and after birth, treating every mother with respect, and supporting her with factual information. A baby friendly hospital also agrees not to accept free or low cost breast milk substitutes (baby formula), feeding bottles or teats.

New Zealand maternity hospitals are encouraged to become baby friendly. The New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority is responsible for implementing BFHI throughout New Zealand and for awarding certificates of accreditation.



If you would like more information about the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, please contact: The Coordinator, New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority, PO Box 1475, Christchurch.

Ten Steps To Successful Breastfeeding

Every maternity facility providing 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. Helping mothers initiate breastfeeding within a half 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 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 artificial teats or pacifiers (also called dummies or soothers) to breastfeeding infants
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.



New Zealand
Breastfeeding
Authority



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