



# Breastfeeding Program

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

## Baby-Friendly Hospitals

### At-a-Glance Info

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) is a global program started in 1991 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to assist and recognize hospitals that offer an optimal level of care for mother and baby. This includes implementing the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding* and the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*.

### Baby-Friendly hospital

designation means the hospital provides the best maternity care for mother and baby, while supporting breastfeeding. Research clearly shows implementing *The Ten Steps* helps to start breastfeeding and get baby off to the healthiest start in life.

Receiving essential breastfeeding support in the hospital significantly increases breastfeeding success.

### The Ten Steps

*to Successful Breastfeeding* are evidence-based practices shown to help mothers successfully initiate and continue to breastfeed.



When touring a birthing facility, ask if the facility is Baby-Friendly designated or pursuing designation. For more information or to find a designated facility, visit [www.babyfriendlyusa.org](http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org).



## What Hospitals Do:

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in the 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 are separated from their infants.
6. Give 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 pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or birth center.

## How Families Benefit:

1. The hospital has a culture supportive of mothers and babies.
2. All staff are educated on and can support mothers with breastfeeding.
3. Families can make an educated decision on the best feeding choice for their baby.
4. Skin-to-skin with baby after birth improves health outcomes, including helping mothers breastfeed successfully.
5. Mothers receive support and resources to successfully breastfeed, or to safely feed formula, if they choose.
6. Exclusive breastfeeding increases health benefits. Formula, water or glucose water given to babies, unless medically indicated, can slow mother's milk production.
7. Mothers and babies stay together day and night, so mothers learn about and get to know their baby.
8. Mothers learn baby's feeding signs and learn to feed as often as baby wants, not by the clock.
9. The early use of artificial nipples, other than for a medical reason, can interfere with breastfeeding and slow mother's milk production.
10. Mothers receive breastfeeding resources in their community so they can get the help and support needed after discharge.