

Choosing to Breastfeed

By choosing to breastfeed, you are providing the best source of nutrition for your baby. Breastmilk has all the nutrients your baby needs, including antibodies to help your baby fight off viruses and bacteria.

In addition, breastmilk protects your baby's gut from germs and diseases, as well as promotes bonding and contributes to your baby's emotional development. Studies show breastfeeding:

- Lowers the risk of SIDS.
- Decreases obesity later in childhood.
- Protects against respiratory and diarrheal disease.
- Lowers likelihood of insulin-dependence.
- Reduces ear infections.
- Protects against allergies.

How we support your breastfeeding

Our Family Birth Place team is here to help you:

- **Feed your baby as soon as possible:** Most babies want to eat within the first hour of birth. We will help you breast feed your baby in a good position and check for a good latch-on.
- **Learn when your baby is hungry:** We encourage feeding whenever your baby is hungry. We will help you learn signs that your baby is hungry, such as licking, sticking out their tongue, putting their hand to their mouth or turning their head with an open mouth looking for your breast.
- **Find comfortable latch and positioning:** The feeding position should be comfortable for you and your baby. Our nurses and specialists can help you learn how to position and latch your baby so both of you are comfortable and your baby gets the best flow possible.
- **Avoid pacifiers and bottles at first:** Experts say it is best to wait to give your baby a pacifier or bottle until breastfeeding is going well (usually around 4 weeks old). Ask your nurse about other techniques to soothe your baby.

Additional lactation support

We offer care from certified lactation consultants and trained nurses during your stay and support after you go home. To speak with a lactation consultant or to make an appointment, please call 503-251-6262.

