

Breastfeeding Support

Helping you and your baby get started

Breastfeeding is healthiest for mothers and babies, so we provide lots of help to make it as easy as possible for you.

We Want to Help You Succeed at Breastfeeding

To help you succeed at breastfeeding, we follow the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.” This means that we:

- Have a written breastfeeding policy
- Have trained all healthcare staff in the skills they need to follow this policy
- Tell all pregnant women about the benefits of breastfeeding
- Help new mothers begin breastfeeding within 1 hour of giving birth
- Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to keep producing milk
- Give babies only breast milk unless they have a medical need
- Keep a mother and her baby together in the same room
- Encourage mothers to breastfeed “on cue”
- Do not give babies artificial nipples or pacifiers
- Refer mothers to breastfeeding support groups



We help new mothers begin breastfeeding within 1 hour of giving birth.

All of our nurses will help you and your baby get started with breastfeeding. We also have lactation consultants who are registered nurses with extra years of study and training so they can help with complex or unusual breastfeeding concerns.

When Your Baby Is Born

All mothers and babies will have skin-to-skin time right after birth. A nurse will show you how to hold your baby and how to help your



You will have skin-to-skin time with your baby right after birth.



UW Medical Center and Valley Medical Center have earned an award called the “Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative” from UNICEF and the World Health Organization. This award is given to hospitals that provide a positive environment for breastfeeding families by following the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.”

baby latch on. The doctors and nurses will support you in feeding your baby according to your baby’s cues.

We will encourage you to breastfeed at least 8 to 12 times a day. At each feeding, let your baby feed at your breast for as long as your baby wants to feed. These frequent, unrestricted feedings are the key to making enough milk.

Exclusive Breastfeeding

You will be encouraged to *exclusively* breastfeed while you are in the hospital. Exclusive breastfeeding means your baby is receiving your breast milk and nothing else. Your baby will not be given formula or water, or a pacifier, unless it is needed for a medical reason.

Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 4 to 6 weeks is very important for getting your milk supply started. Breastfeeding during these early weeks “sets” your milk supply. When your baby sucks on your breasts, your body learns to make just the right amount of milk your baby needs to grow.

Using formula in the early weeks may set your milk supply lower than your baby needs. If you set your milk supply high in the first 6 weeks, you will find it easier to maintain your milk supply for the rest of your baby’s first year and beyond.

Learning Your Baby’s Feeding Cues

Your baby will stay with you in your hospital room. This helps you learn your baby’s early *feeding cues* so that you can feed her at the first signs of hunger.

Early feeding cues include:

- Bringing her hands to mouth
- “Rooting” – turning her head while opening her mouth wide, like she is searching for something to suck on
- Mouthing or sucking motions

If your baby has to be taken away for a procedure and uses a pacifier during that time, take the pacifier away as soon as your baby is with you again. Then, breastfeed to calm her.



If you have breastfeeding concerns, a lactation consultant is available to help you for the entire time that you are breastfeeding your baby.

Breastfeeding Support After You Go Home

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises giving infants only breast milk for the first 6 months of life. The AAP also advises breastfeeding through the first year of life and beyond. The longer and more exclusively your baby breastfeeds, the greater the health benefits for both your baby and you. We are here to help you every step along the way.

If You Gave Birth at UW Medical Center

After going home, mothers who gave birth at UWMC can return to the Mother Baby Unit for an “early post-birth visit” with a lactation consultant. The consultant will weigh your baby, check for jaundice, make sure that breastfeeding is going well, and answer any questions you have about feeding your baby.

UWMC Lactation Services is available to you for the entire time that you and your baby are breastfeeding. If you would like help from a lactation consultant after the first few days, you can talk with one over the phone or meet with one at UWMC. Please call Lactation Services at 206.598.4628 to talk with or schedule an appointment with a lactation consultant.

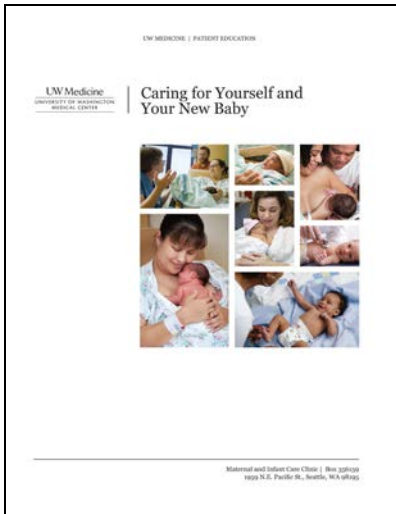
If You Attend the UW or Work at the UW

If you are a mother attending the University of Washington (UW) or working at the UW, you will be glad to know about the many on-site lactation stations. While it may be hard to leave your baby to attend school or go to work, it should be easy to maintain your milk supply with the hospital-quality, electric double pumps available at many of the lactation stations you can use. Most women find it takes less than 15 minutes to express their milk.

All lactation stations provide a private, secure, clean space for using the pump that is there, or for using your own pump. For more information about this service:

- Visit <http://hr.uw.edu/worklife/parenting/lactation-stations>
- Email womens@uw.edu
- Call 206.685.1090

If you have questions about going back to work or school at someplace other than UW, call our lactation consultants at 206.598.4628.



You will receive our book *Caring for Yourself and Your New Baby* after your baby is born.

***Caring for Yourself and Your New Baby* Book**

You will receive much more information after your baby is born. While you are in the hospital, we will give you our book, *Caring for Yourself and Your New Baby*. It has detailed information about:

- Position and latch for breastfeeding
- Common concerns about breastfeeding
- Comfort measures for sore nipples and engorgement
- How to express and store milk
- What is safe and not safe to take while breastfeeding

The book also has a checklist for you to use during your first week of breastfeeding to help you know what to expect. This checklist can help you decide if you want to call a lactation specialist for help in getting breastfeeding started.

If you want to read this book before your baby is born, all of the chapters are on the UW Medicine Lactation Services website: www.uwmedicine.org/services/obstetrics/lactation-services.

Questions?

Your questions are important.

If you have questions about breastfeeding, call Lactation Services at your hospital.