

Parents' guide to the Infant feeding policy

AIMS

Frimley Park Hospital is a UNICEF UK Baby Friendly level 3 accredited hospital and Wexham Park Hospital is working towards level 3 accreditation; supporting the rights of all parents to make an informed choice about infant feeding. We recognise the importance of supporting all parents to feed their babies with confidence and to build strong and loving parent-infant relationships; these relationships are crucial for good health and well-being. Breastfeeding makes a significant contribution to good physical and emotional health outcomes for your baby and you. Therefore, we will encourage and support you to breastfeed your baby.

Ways we will help you to feed your baby successfully

- During your pregnancy, you will be able to discuss Infant feeding individually with your midwife or one of our maternity support workers. They will be able to give you accurate and up to date information and answer any questions you might have. This discussion will include ways in which you can connect with your unborn baby in preparation for feeding.
- Hand expressing in the antenatal period, called colostrum harvesting, can be beneficial for babies. Please ask your community midwife for more information.
- You will have the opportunity to hold your new baby against your skin immediately after birth and to offer the first feed in skin to skin contact. The staff will not interfere or hurry you but will be there to support you and your baby with your first feed.
- If you choose to breastfeed, a midwife will be available to explain how to position and attach your baby at the breast correctly and to help with feeds in the early days while you are in hospital. You will be offered further help within 6 hours of birth. If you choose to artificially feed your baby you will be shown how to hold and feed your baby safely and bottle feed in a responsive way, also how to sterilise equipment and make up feeds correctly.
- You will be shown how to express your breastmilk and will receive information on how to recognise effective feeding.
- We encourage you to always keep your baby close or in skin-to-skin contact, so that you can respond to their needs.
- Most healthy term babies do not need to be given anything other than breast milk for the first six months. If, for medical reasons, your baby needs additional supplementary feeds other than breastmilk, this will be explained to you by the staff, and you will be asked to give your permission.
- Normally your baby will be with you at all times. If any medical procedures are necessary, you will always be invited to accompany your baby.
- We will encourage you to feed your baby whenever he or she displays feeding cues. Staff will help you to recognise these feeding cues. This is known as responsive feeding.
- Offer the breast to your baby when your baby shows feeding cues, but also if your baby is distressed or needs comfort; or if you wish to relax and if your breasts are full.

- We recommend that you avoid using bottles, dummies, and nipple shields while your baby is learning to breastfeed. This is because they can change the way your baby sucks, which may make it more difficult for your baby to breastfeed successfully.
- Before you leave hospital, we will give you contact details of local and national support groups/organisations and a list of telephone numbers of people who can provide extra help and support with breastfeeding when you are home. Remember, your midwife is always happy to offer help and support.

This is your guide to the Infant feeding policy. Please ask a member of staff if you wish to see the full policy.

You may also find this video from UNICEF helpful.

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/video/breastfeeding-and-relationships-in-the-early-days/>