



What to Know, What to Ask

Before baby arrives

- Take a breastfeeding class if one is available in your community.
- Review your birth and breastfeeding plan with your doctor.
- Find local resources such as International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC), breastfeeding peer counselors, and breastfeeding support groups.
- Know your rights. According to North Carolina law you have a right to breastfeed in any public or private location. Be your own advocate. Ask for what you want!

At the hospital

- Ask if your hospital is Baby-Friendly or has a North Carolina Maternity Center Breastfeeding-Friendly Designation.
- Ask that your baby be put skin-to-skin as quickly as possible after delivery.
- Breastfeeding is easier if you and your baby are together. Ask if your hospital allows “rooming in”—this is where your baby stays in the room with you so you can learn your baby’s cues and respond to his/her needs. Let the hospital staff know you plan to breastfeed your baby on demand.
- Try to breastfeed your baby 8–12 times in 24 hours to establish your milk supply. Trying to keep feedings to a set time can cause new moms to become preoccupied with watching the clock. This can hurt your success at breastfeeding. Many experts agree that no limits should be placed on the length of feedings.
- Inform the hospital staff that you do not wish for your baby to receive supplements or artificial teats (bottles, nipples, pacifiers) unless medically necessary. Breastfed babies who are given supplements or pacifiers can become confused between the artificial teat and the breast. Giving baby unnecessary supplements may inhibit your milk production.
- Find out if your hospital provides outpatient lactation services such as one-on-one counseling, support groups, or breastfeeding supplies.

Breastfeeding or pumping at work

- Find out if there is a breastfeeding policy at your workplace. You may be allowed break time and space to breastfeed or pump breast milk in the workplace. Contact your workplace Human Resources to find out if this applies to your position.
- Discuss with your supervisor your plans to breastfeed and how you can work together to accomplish your breastfeeding goals.
- Talk to your supervisor about working from home a few days a week or gradually returning to work.
- Ask if your workplace will have a clean, quiet place with lockable door and electrical outlet for you to pump breast milk or feed your baby. The room should include a comfortable chair where you can sit while breastfeeding or pumping breast milk. A place to wash equipment should be in close proximity. It is not appropriate or sanitary to pump or feed breast milk in a bathroom stall.

