



10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding" are the foundation of [Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative \(BFHI\)](#) and summarize the maternity practices necessary to support breastfeeding. A maternity facility can be designated 'baby-friendly' when it does not accept free or low-cost breastmilk substitutes, feeding bottles or teats, and has implemented these *10 specific steps to support successful breastfeeding*:

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in 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 newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, 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