

Preparing for Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding your baby is a beautiful bonding experience most mothers look forward to. It's part of the natural process following pregnancy and birth when your body is primed to make colostrum for your new baby with full milk production following in response to your baby feeding. But while breastfeeding may be the natural and normal way to feed a baby, some mothers and babies struggle to get the hang of things in the early days.

When it comes to breastfeeding you might find that everyone's an expert. Parents are sometimes given incorrect and conflicting advice from well-meaning family and friends and while some online forums can offer empathy and support, they can also overload sleep deprived parents with comments and suggestions.

Babies do have natural instincts to breastfeed, but there is still a learning phase as mum and baby bond and figure it all out. During these early weeks it is important to have learning opportunities about breastfeeding and practical support from caring professionals who will help both mum and baby get off to a good start.

International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC's) are Health professionals who are trained specifically in breastfeeding and can provide guidance, up to date information and support for breastfeeding mothers. North West Private Hospital's maternity unit has a number of trained Lactation Consultants on hand to help new mums as they learn to breastfeed their baby in a supportive environment. Our midwives and nurses are also skilled in helping new mothers with tricky issues like attachment and finding the breastfeeding position that's right for you.

Breastfeeding provides your baby with the best possible nutrition and many health benefits for both mother and baby. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, and then the introduction of family foods to complement breastfeeding to 2 years and beyond.

Before your baby's birth do some research from reputable sources like the Australian Breastfeeding Association to prepare yourself for the breastfeeding journey and familiarise yourself on what resources are available to you when you take your baby home. Attending an antenatal breastfeeding class is another great way of getting prepared to give breastfeeding your best shot. Being informed, having practical support and a positive environment, all help with breastfeeding success.

Useful link:

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

www.raisngchildren.com

www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding

www.lcanz.org