

Breastfeeding—Supporting a Healthier Generation from the Start

The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative

- The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) is a global program supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that offer an ideal level of care for infant feeding.³
- To achieve the Baby-Friendly designation, facilities must register with Baby-Friendly USA; complete all of the requirements, and demonstrate that they have correctly integrated all of the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding” into their routine care plan for newborns.³
- Health professionals can lead by example by providing an environment that supports breastfeeding and ultimately promotes optimal health for both mothers and infants.

Healthy People 2020 Objectives for Breastfeeding²

Objective	Baseline (%)	Target (%)
Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed		
Ever	74.0	81.9
Exclusively through six months	14.1	25.5
Increase the proportion of employers that have worksite lactation support programs	25	38
Reduce the proportion of breastfed newborns who receive formula supplementation within the first two days of life	24.2	14.2
Increase the proportion of live births that occur in facilities that provide recommended care for lactating mothers and their babies	2.9	8.1

Maternal, Infant and Child Health indicators



Data on Health Benefits

For Infants:

- Breast milk contains immunological and anti-inflammatory properties that protect infants from numerous illnesses and diseases¹. Breastfeeding results in a decreased risk of common childhood illnesses like diarrhea and ear infections, as well as more rare but serious diseases and infections like leukemia and severe lower respiratory infection.¹
- Evidence suggests that breastfeeding is associated with lower risks for major chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, asthma, and childhood obesity.¹

For Mothers:

- Breastfeeding offers many health benefits for the mother. Several studies have found the risk of certain cancers—mainly breast and ovarian cancer to be higher in women who have never breastfed.¹
- Many psychosocial benefits of breastfeeding have also been documented. Breastfeeding can help women more closely bond with their infants and may also lower a women’s risk for postpartum depression.¹

The BFHI Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding³

- Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
- Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy.
- Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
- Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
- Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they are separated from their infants.
- Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless *medically* indicated.
- Practice “rooming in” to allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
- Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
- Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
- Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.



Current BFHI Hospitals in Minnesota

- **Mayo Clinic Health System– Austin**
- **University of Minnesota Amplatz Children’s Hospital**

Leaders of Breastfeeding Initiatives in Minnesota

- **Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition.** There are currently 27 local coalitions in MN working at a grassroots level to promote breastfeeding: <http://mnbreastfeedingcoalition.org/>
- **Golden Start Breastfeeding Initiative.** Provides professional services to families with breastfeeding questions and challenges during pregnancy and throughout the breastfeeding experience: <http://www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/publichealth/goldenstart/default.php>
- **Minnesota Task Force on Childhood Obesity.** Task force comprised of representatives of key organizations and stakeholder groups throughout the state who are committed in addressing the health of children and youth: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/obesity/pdfdocs/childhoodobesityrecommendations.pdf>

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Federal and Community –based Organizations that Support Breastfeeding

- **International Lactation Consultants Association**
- **La Leche League International**
- **HHS Office on Women’s Health (OWH)**
- **The United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC)**
- **Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) Minnesota resources:** <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/wic/>

Resources:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding. Washington, D.C.; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General; 2011.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2008-2011). Healthy People 2020: Breastfeeding Objectives. Retrieved November 1, 2011, from <http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/LegislationPolicy/FederalPolicies/HealthyPeople2020BreastfeedingObjectives/tabid/120/Default.aspx>.

Baby~Friendly USA. (2010). BFHI USA: Implementing the UNICEF/WHO Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative in the U.S.. Retrieved November 1, 2011, from <http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org/eng/index.html>.