



# Western Upper Peninsula Health Department **BREASTFEEDING**

*The quarterly newsletter for breastfeeding information*



## **GETTING STARTED**

*In this edition we will be talking about 5 tips to help you get breastfeeding off to a good start right after baby is born.*

### **1. Skin to Skin.**

Skin to skin is simply having your baby chest to chest with you, without any barriers (such as a bra, shirt, blanket, etc.) It is ideal for mom and baby to spend the first hour after birth doing uninterrupted skin to skin. This will help to regulate babies temperature, heart rate, can help baby latch on their own, and helps create a strong bond between mom and baby. Skin to skin does NOT have to be done by just mom, this is a great way for baby to bond with dad, or other people close to you as well. It is great to continue skin to skin even after leaving the hospital.

### **2. Bring baby to breast as early and as often as possible.**

This comes along with skin to skin. Having your baby skin to skin will create a space where baby can begin their self discovery of beginning to breastfeed. Often times by having your baby skin to skin, they will naturally begin to latch on their own. It's important to bring baby to breast as soon as possible, and to keep offering and assisting baby to breastfeed to help your body increase the amount of milk its making and kick breastfeeding off to a good start.



*Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person*

### 3. Breastmilk ONLY, unless medically indicated.

Your baby's stomach is only about the size of a marble for the first 24 hours. It only takes about a spoonful of milk to fill their stomach, this increases up to about 1-2oz (per feeding) by the first week. By bringing your baby to breast early and often, this will help your milk production increase, and your body will begin to create the amount of milk baby needs. If supplementing or formula feeding is being talked about, you can ask about supplementing with your own milk (via pumping or hand expression) if there is a reason baby isn't able to effectively remove milk on their own.

### 4. Practice Hand Expression.

Hand expression is a way to remove milk without any other "tools" needed.

It may take some getting used to and you may not see much milk flow at first, but just keep trying! Hand expression is a great tool to have for many reasons. It can help you remove milk if your breasts are engorged, if baby isn't latching, and can help get milk flowing.

**How to hand express:** Make "C" with your hand, right behind the nipple, press back toward your chest, and compress/squeeze the breast. Relax and repeat. Doing hand expression should NOT be painful, it is also possible to induce contractions, and is best to wait to practice or do until you are full term or your doctor has okayed it.



press (back towards your chest)



compress



relax

### 5. Use Your Supports.

It is the perfect time to ask for help while you're still in the hospital. You can ask for a nurse or IBCLC (International Board Certified Lactation Consultant) to assist you or you can call your local WIC office to get in touch with breastfeeding peer support. Ask your family and friends who have experience in breastfeeding to give you a hand or encouragement. There is no shame in this! The more support you have, the more at ease you may feel, and relieving stress/pressures while trying to establish breastfeeding can help immensely.

**If you don't feel comfortable contacting a family member or friend to assist you on your breastfeeding journey, please don't hesitate to contact your local WIC breastfeeding peer. You will receive judgement free, educated advice and support. We are here for YOU.**

*Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person*

