



# INFANT FEEDING DISCUSSION POINTS

## Regional Tool for Health Care Providers



**This document is intended to be used by health care providers to guide discussions on infant feeding choices. All information is current and evidence-based and supported by international and national organizations such as, the World Health Organization, Health Canada, Canadian Pediatric Society, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine.**

1. Provide the parent with the appropriate patient information sheet:
  - Feeding your Baby: Information to help with decisions
  - Feeding your baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
2. Record the parents' infant feeding decision that follows your discussion on the back of this document. Their decision may be revisited upon request or as medically necessary.

### **Exclusive Breastfeeding:**

Some women choose to feed breastmilk exclusively. Exclusive breastfeeding includes feeding at the breast or giving mother's own expressed breastmilk or banked screened donor milk. These babies are fed no other fluids or foods except for vitamins or medicines for about six months. Skin-to-skin and breastfeeding within the first hour of birth and exclusively in the early days helps bring mother's milk in, reduces breast engorgement and leads to a better long term milk supply.

Encourage mothers to ask a nurse or lactation consultant how to latch their baby, or hand express or pump. Exclusive breastfeeding can be an important goal, but occasionally there may be a medical need to give the baby more milk; mother's own expressed breast milk would be first choice. The second choice is banked donor human milk, if available, or formula. Encourage mothers to discuss any concerns if they feel exclusive breastfeeding is not meeting their needs.

### **Mixed Feeding:**

Some mothers intend to breastfeed but are open to using formula at times when they are not with their babies or they do not have mother's own milk to offer their babies. Help these mothers understand that any amount of skin-to-skin and breastfeeding provides benefits for mother and baby. Provide accurate, unbiased information on breastfeeding and formula feeding. Sometimes feeding babies away from the breast makes it hard for babies to go back to the breast, and may decrease mother's milk supply. Hand expression or pumping each time the baby gets formula will help protect the milk supply. Stress the importance of establishing breastfeeding (if possible) prior to introducing other feeding methods (eg. bottle).

### **Breastmilk Substitute/Formula Feeding:**

Both personal and medical reasons may lead parents to decide to feed formula to their baby. We are here to support mothers in their feeding choices and ensure they have all the information they need. Parents will be taught how to bottle feed in a Baby Friendly way including doing skin-to-skin, switching sides for feedings and using paced feedings. Parents will be taught how to correctly prepare and store formula. Formula feeding mothers will be taught how to manage their breasts if their milk causes them discomfort.

### **Resources to assist discussion:**

- Skin-to-Skin (located in the FH Patient Education Catalogue)

#### Breastfeeding

- Feeding Your Baby (0-6 months) (located in the FH Patient Education Catalogue)
- Breastfeeding HealthLinkBC File 70

#### Donor Milk

- Donor Human Milk (located in the FH Patient Education Catalogue)

#### Formula

- Formula Feeding Your Baby Birth to 6 months (located in the FH Patient Education Catalogue)
- Formula Feeding Your Baby: Getting Started HealthLinkBC File 69a
- Formula Feeding Your Baby: Safely Preparing and Storing Formula HealthLinkBC File 69b

# INFANT FEEDING DISCUSSION POINTS

## Cont'd

### Indicate information sheet provided:

- Feeding your Baby: Information to help with decisions
- Feeding your baby in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)

### Indicate preferred feeding goal(s) below.

- Preferred goal is to provide exclusive breastmilk.
  - Infant feeding record or breastmilk expression log
  - Expressing Your Breast Milk: Getting Started When Your Baby is in the Hospital
  - Referred to Hand Expression video located on FH Best Beginnings Website

- Preferred goal is to do mixed feeding
  - Infant feeding record or breastmilk expression log
  - Expressing Your Breast Milk: Getting Started When Your Baby is in the Hospital
  - Referred to Hand Expression video located on FH Best Beginnings Website
  - Reviewed Health Files on Formula Use and Preparation:
    - Formula Feeding Your Baby: Getting Started (HealthLinkBC File 69a)
    - Formula Feeding Your Baby: Safely Preparing and Storing Formula (HealthLinkBC File 69b)

- Preferred goal is to use Breastmilk Substitutes/Formula
  - Cold gel packs on breasts will help slow the production of breastmilk.
  - If not contraindicated, Ibuprofen is recommended as a comfort measure.
  - Counsel mom to hand express or pump only "to comfort" and no more.
  - Avoid heat to breasts
  - Reviewed Health Files on Formula Use and Preparation:
    - Formula Feeding Your Baby: Getting Started (HealthLinkBC File 69a)
    - Formula Feeding Your Baby: Safely Preparing and Storing Formula (HealthLinkBC File 69b)

**I have discussed the benefits of skin-to-skin, breastfeeding and breastmilk feeding with the parent as described in this document.**

Health Care Provider (HCP) (initials) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Complete this section to reflect any changes the parents have made to their preferred feeding goal.

Revised goal: Exclusive    Mixed    Substitute    HCP (initials) \_\_\_\_\_    Date \_\_\_\_\_

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