



The Infant Feeding Policy and Baby-Friendly Initiative.

Information for leaders, staff, physicians, volunteers, and learners

Background

The Nova Scotia Health and IWK Health **Infant Feeding Policy (IFP)** has been in effect since 2018. The IFP uses the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) **Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI)** as its framework.

Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI)

- Is based on best practices in maternal and child health.
- Promotes informed infant feeding decisions and breast and chestfeeding.
- Supports families in the hospital and community before, during and after birth.

The NSH and IWK Health Infant Feeding Policy

- Supports all families and their babies, regardless of their feeding method.
- Empowers families to make informed decisions about how to feed their baby safely.

All families receive:

- information about the importance of skin-to-skin care and human milk and
- effective teaching about responsive feeding for their baby

Families who feed their babies a human milk substitute will be provided guidance and information on purchasing, feeding practices, safe preparation and storage of these products.

The Importance of Becoming Baby-Friendly

Health programs and services adopting BFI best practices have observed:

- Improved transition of babies and families from hospital to home.
- Increased rates of initiation, exclusivity and duration of breast and chestfeeding.
- Decreased use of human milk substitutes.
- Reduced costs for families and facilities.
- Increased patient satisfaction.
- Healthier children, families, and communities.



How to Become Baby-Friendly



- Be informed about the [Infant Feeding Policy](#), including the minimal education requirements for you to fulfill your role.
 - Recognize that adherence to the policy is mandatory for all leaders, staff, physicians, volunteers and learners.
 - Contribute to a welcoming environment for families to feed their babies:
 - Adopt and maintain a welcoming attitude toward all families.
 - Display information that explicitly states breast and chestfeeding are welcome.
 - Display the Infant Feeding Policy posters for the public.
- Specifically for health care providers:
- Always consider how a baby is being fed when making treatment decisions for mother or baby.
 - Know who in your area to contact if you have questions about how to support a family in their infant feeding decisions.

Tips for Implementing the Infant Feeding Policy

- Ensure new employees are made aware of the Infant Feeding Policy during orientation and what their role is.
- Ensure employees are aware of the influence of their attitudes and behaviours when working with families.
- Support all employees to obtain the minimal education requirements as outlined in the Infant Feeding Policy as appropriate to their role.
- Ensure all employees comply with the [WHO International Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes](#), including:
 - All human milk substitutes are stored out of sight.
 - No posters, marketing materials, or samples for human milk substitutes are displayed or distributed.
 - No acceptance of gifts, literature, or money for education from human milk substitute manufacturers or distributors.



If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact:

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