



Picture of Nicola a midwife from ESTH

Feeding your baby

Infant Feeding Advisors

At Epsom and St Helier hospitals we understand that pregnancy is a time for choices and one of those choices is how you are going to feed your baby, either by breastfeeding or with artificial milk. You will be supported in whatever decision you make.

The health professionals at Epsom and St Helier would like to encourage and support you to breastfeed your baby, as breast milk is specifically designed to meet your baby’s needs and offers health benefits to you both. This will be discussed further with you at your antenatal appointments.

As well as talking to your midwife, you will get lots more information from the ‘off to the best start’ leaflet in your 28 week pack and websites/apps such as:

- www.babyfriendly.org.uk/leaflets, including building a happy baby and off to the best start
- www.isisonline.org.uk for evidence-based infant safer sleeping information
- Our website www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk
- www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/phone-apps – baby buddy app
- www.your-baby.co.uk for information and short videos about getting to know your baby
- www.firststepsnutrition.org for factual information about formula
- www.breastfeedingnetwork for information about medications in mothers milk

Some of the benefits of breastfeeding

FOR YOUR BABY	FOR YOU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps protect against infections, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gastroenteritis, diarrhoea and tummy upsets ○ Chest infections and wheezing ○ Ear infections • Optimal growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced incidence of obesity ○ Higher IQ • Helps against disease such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asthma and eczema (especially if family history) ○ Lower risk of childhood diabetes ○ Necrotising Enterocolitis – this life threatening condition, which occurs mainly in premature babies, is much less frequent if the baby is given only breast milk ○ Childhood leukaemia ○ Cot death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowers risk of ovarian cancer • Lowers risk of breast cancer • Lowers risk of Osteoporosis which means stronger bones later in life • Reduced incidence of postnatal depression • It uses up the fat you have stored during pregnancy and helps you return to your pre pregnancy size! • Helps your uterus to contract more quickly and return to its normal size • It is cheaper than formula feeding and it is less work as you don’t have to make up feeds, sterilise bottles and teats, etc.

Skin to skin contact

Regardless of how you choose to feed your baby, a great way to meet your new arrival is through skin to skin contact at birth. This will help to calm your baby, steady their breathing and help to keep them warm. This would also be a great time to start your first breastfeed because your baby will be alert and want to feed within a couple of hours of birth. These first precious hours can be a time where you and your partner can quietly get to know your baby and your baby get know you undisturbed during its first few feeds. We would ask you at this time not to use your mobiles or have visitors, so that you can enjoy this special experience.

Contact us

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