



Lactation Support for Fetal Cardiology Patients

At Boston Children's Hospital, we recognize that breastfeeding is important to families and the health of their children. Lactation Specialists work as part of the healthcare team to promote and support breastfeeding.

Can I breastfeed my baby?

If you planned to breastfeed your baby before you learned of your baby's cardiac diagnosis, this plan does not need to change. If you are uncertain about your feeding choice, talk to a lactation consultant about the extra benefits your milk can provide for your baby because of their additional medical needs. Breast milk provides many advantages for your newborn baby and can help fight infection. Breast milk is an important part of your newborn's healthcare and only you can provide it!

Even if your baby cannot eat right away, you can express your milk with a breast pump to save for later use. If you are interested in breast feeding or bottle feeding your baby pumped breast milk, we encourage you to meet with our lactation specialists prior to and after delivery.

Will I have access to a breast pump in the hospital?

You will have access to hospital grade electric breast pumps during your infant's stay. There are breast pumps available for use in lactation rooms, at the patient bedside, as well as in the family sleep spaces and housing facilities.

Most families will also qualify for a small portable breast pump from their insurance that can be used when you are away from the hospital. If you receive one before you deliver, be sure to bring this pump with you in case you need it. Otherwise, ask your nurse or lactation consultant for help in obtaining a breast pump post-partum.

The hospital will provide you with new, clean bottles to store your milk in, as well as labels to identify the milk as belonging to your baby. Cleaning supplies for your equipment are also provided. Breastmilk is stored in secure freezers and refrigerators, accessible only to staff. You may not always have immediate access to a refrigerator for pumped milk,

especially in the middle of the night. For this reason, you may wish to bring a small cooler and icepack with you to transport your breastmilk.

Boston Children's Lactation Support Program:

- Gives breastfeeding support and education to mothers
- Works with mothers to prevent and manage breastfeeding problems
- Supports breastfeeding infants with special healthcare needs, such as babies with congenital heart disease and premature babies
- Helps mothers maintain their milk supply when separated from their babies
- Helps mothers find breast pumps and equipment, and teaches them how to use them
- Consults with parents who expect their baby to be in the hospital after birth. Ask the Advanced Fetal Care Coordinator staff to schedule a consult for you.

Where is the Lactation Support Program?

We are part of the *Hale Family Center for Families* located in the Main Lobby.

Who are the Lactation Consultants?

Our Lactation Specialists are International Board Certified Lactation Consultants. They are also registered nurses, registered dietitians or pediatric nurse practitioners with experience working with medically complex infants. Clinical staff nurses are also available to help with your breastfeeding needs.

What breastfeeding supplies and equipment are available in the hospital?

- Breast pumps: You can rent the Medela Symphony (short- or long-term) from the Hale Family Center for Families.
- The Milk Pod vending machine offers breastfeeding supplies, bras and equipment. It is on Fegan 1 near the Ambulatory elevators.

Contact Us:

If you have any questions please call the Lactation Support Program at: (617) 355-0005.