Getting Breastfeeding off to a Great Start
What is the Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI)?

The BFI is a global program that Protects, Promotes, and Supports breastfeeding families and formula feeding families by providing accurate information on infant feeding.
What to expect in the hospital to support your breastfeeding goals?

• At delivery, your baby will be placed on your chest skin-to-skin.

• Dad or your partner can also hold the baby skin-to-skin if mom is unable to.
The Power of Skin-to-Skin

- Promotes exclusive breastfeeding
- Keeps your baby warm
- Calms and soothes your baby
- Protects your baby from infections
- Stabilizes heart rate, breathing & blood sugar
- Reduces pain from painful procedures
Your baby will always be with you.
All routine procedures and exams will be done with you present and in skin-to-skin if possible.

All women’s and child staff have extra training to support breastfeeding.
Why is it important to Breastfeed?

Breast milk contains all the necessary nutrients to meet your baby's growing needs.

Breastfeeding decreases the risk for breast cancer.

Breast milk helps your baby fight disease and illness. It contains fats and proteins that guard against bacteria and viruses.

Breastfeeding decreases the risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease for Mom and Baby.

Breastfeeding is a great time to bond with your baby.

Breastfeeding gives mom stronger bones.

Babies who are fed breast milk are less likely to have allergies.
Breastfeeding takes patience and practice.

Feeding early and often will help your baby learn to breastfeed and establish your milk supply.
How Does Breastfeeding Work?

• Your breasts produce colostrum beginning during pregnancy and continuing through the early days of breastfeeding.

• This special milk is yellow to orange in color and thick and sticky.

• It’s nickname is “Liquid Gold” because it is a treasure you have only for the first few days.
• Colostrum contains a large amount of living cells. These living cells are antibodies that protect against disease causing bacteria and viruses. It acts as the baby’s first vaccine.

• It is low in volume but high in concentrated nutrition and antibodies and is all your baby needs in the first few days.

• Your baby’s tummy is the size of a cherry in the first couple of days.
The First 24 - 72 Hours

The time in hospital is focused on learning to breastfeed and getting to know your newborn.

Watch for early signs of hunger such as stretching and hand to mouth motions.

At first, your baby may be sleepy but on the second night, the baby will feed often at the breast and cry if you take him away from your warm body. THIS ARE NORMAL FEEDING BEHAVIORS and what we expect to happen.
Normal infant feeding behaviors

Breast milk is easily digested. Your baby feeds frequently at night and in the evenings to meet his growing needs. This is known as cluster feeding.

You may feel tempted to supplement with formula, but this can create problems with your breastfeeding such as nipple confusion. Also, it can decrease your milk supply which can be difficult to reverse.

All babies grow differently. Growth spurts usually occur at about 2-3 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.
What happens if I am separated from my baby?

Your nurses will teach you one-on-one how to hand express your breast milk.

If you are planning to use an breast pump, there are many different kinds available. Please choose one that best suits your needs.
Removing milk from your breasts will help stimulate and maintain your milk supply.

You may need to express your milk to:

- Provide breast milk if your baby isn’t able to latch
- Provide breast milk for your sick or preterm baby
- Provide breast milk if you’re away from your baby
- Help soften your breast if your breasts are engorged
Breastfeeding Buddy

Find a Breastfeeding Buddy! This can be a family member, a friend, or another mother from a support group who has had a positive breastfeeding experience. Your breastfeeding buddy can give you tips and share her breastfeeding knowledge and experiences to help you successfully breastfeed.
Additional Resources

Free Breastfeeding Clinics at the Misericordia Hospital and the Grey Nuns Hospital

La Leche League- http://www.lllc.ca

Global health media- http://globalhealthmedia.org/videos/

Healthy Beginnings Hotline phone number: 780-413-7990