



Prenatal Breastfeeding Key Messages: A Healthcare Provider Documentation Tool

Consistent information for families

Mother's name _____

Mother's birthdate _____

Expected date of delivery _____

Weeks' Gestation	Question/Key Point	Important Points	Sign & Date as Discussed
8 weeks	<p><u>Plans for feeding your baby</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you thought about how you will feed your baby? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Breastfeeding is important. The WHO, Health Canada and the Canadian Pediatric Society recommend mothers exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, and continue up to 2 years and beyond along with the introduction of complementary solids." "Exclusive breastfeeding means your baby does not need anything else to eat or drink for the first 6 months." Throughout discussions, ensure the parent is making an informed decision. Refer families to: Caring for Kids – Breastfeeding (website). 	
12 weeks	<p><u>Questions about breastfeeding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What have you heard about breastfeeding? Have you noticed any changes in your breasts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "As your body prepares to breastfeed, you may see some changes in your breasts during pregnancy. Bodies are designed to breastfeed." See professional resource: Prenatal Education: Key Messages for Ontario (website). Refer families to: QMama (website and app). 	
16 weeks	<p><u>The importance of breastfeeding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many reasons why breastfeeding is important for a parent and for their baby. There are risks associated with not breastfeeding. It is difficult to reverse the decision once breastfeeding has stopped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Breastfeeding is normal for a parent and baby. There may be challenges in the first few weeks; get help early. There are health risks associated when choosing not breastfeeding." "Bottle feeding breast milk has some risks such as increased risk of infant overweight, reduced milk supply over time and poorer oral facial development for the newborn. It takes extra time to pump milk and then bottle feed your newborn." Refer families to: Breastfeeding Matters: An Important Guide to Breastfeeding for Women and their Families (booklet) or, for lower literacy My Breastfeeding Guide (booklet) available on the Best Start Resource Centre (website). Refer families who have made an informed decision to use formula to: Infant Formula: What You Need to Know (booklet) on the Best Start Resource Centre (website). 	
20 weeks	<p><u>Prenatal breastfeeding education; starting a breastfeeding plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you registered for prenatal breastfeeding classes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Access prenatal breastfeeding class options at your local health unit or community health centre." Find a class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ontariobreastfeeds.ca 211ontario.ca thehealthline.ca ottawabreastfeeds.ca Renfrewcountybreastfeeds.com Parenting in Ottawa Hastings Prince Edward Public Health Eastern Ontario health Unit KFL&A Public Health Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit Renfrew County and District Health Unit For a breastfeeding plan, refer families to: Breastfeeding Resources Ontario (website). 	

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24 weeks	<p><u>Supports while breastfeeding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What supports do you have to help you breastfeed (family, parent-to-parent, professional)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Get connected with parent to parent (peer) support through your health unit or La Leche League. Start in your third trimester.” “Use help from professionals for breastfeeding expertise (such as lactation consultants) or for any challenges you may encounter.” Refer families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> La Leche League Canada ontariobreastfeeds.ca 211ontario.ca thehealthline.ca ottawabreastfeeds.ca Renfrewcountybreastfeeds.com Parenting in Ottawa Hastings Prince Edward Public Health Eastern Ontario health Unit KFL&A Public Health Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit Renfrew County and District Health Unit 	
28 weeks	<p><u>The importance of skin-to-skin contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding your baby skin-to-skin without interruption after birth is really important. Skin-to-skin contact is when your naked baby (with or without a diaper) is placed tummy-down on your bare chest. Hold your baby skin-to-skin a lot in the first few weeks and months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Practice skin-to-skin a lot; it regulates your baby’s temperature, breathing and heart rate and it feels great!” After birth, hold your baby skin-to-skin right away and <i>continuously</i> for at least the first hour, and for as long as you and your baby wish.” “Hold skin-to-skin as much as possible, even for the first months. Your partner may also help hold skin-to-skin.” “Hold skin-to-skin and breastfeeding during painful procedures to help reduce pain.” 	
30 weeks	<p><u>Keeping your baby close in the early weeks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rooming-in with your baby from birth has many benefits. This will help you learn your baby’s feeding cues, respond quickly to your baby needs, build your confidence, and get breastfeeding off to a good start. Try to have weight checks, tests or exams done in your room. If baby must leave have a parent go along. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Rooming-in or ‘zero separation’ at the hospital and at home will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps you recognize and respond to your baby’s feeding cues. Makes you become more familiar with your baby. Lowers the risk of SIDS.” Right from birth, place your baby on their back to sleep in a crib, in the parents’ room. Share the same room with your child for the first 6 months. Refer families to: <i>Sleep Well, Sleep Safe: A booklet for parents of infants from 0-12 months and for all who care for infants</i> (booklet) on the Best Start Resource Centre (website). 	
32 weeks	<p><u>Avoiding pacifiers and bottles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many ways to calm your baby without using a soother or pacifier. Avoid using a pacifier or bottle unless medically indicated as they can make breastfeeding challenging. Carrying, rocking and holding your baby skin-to-skin are good ways to soothe your baby. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “When parents use pacifiers it is easy to miss feeding cues; therefore a feed could be missed.” “Breastfeeding may take longer to go smoothly or may end sooner because milk supply may be impacted if soothers are introduced.” “Babies who use soother are more likely to have ear infections.” Support parents to make an informed decision regarding pacifier use. Refer families to: Breastfeeding Resources Ontario (website). 	

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34 weeks	<p><u>How much and how often to breastfeed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for and learn your baby's "feeding cues" and feed your baby on demand whenever your baby is hungry. • It is normal for babies to lose some weight in the early days. • Breastfeed 8 or more times in 24 hours (day and night) and offer both breasts at each feed. • Frequent feeding is common and does not mean your milk supply is low. In fact, the more your baby feeds the more milk your body makes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Your baby's stomach is small at birth (about the size of a cherry). Colostrum is the first milk, has many nutrients and antibodies. It is the only milk that your baby needs. Feed your baby a lot in the early days and offer both breasts each feed. Newborns tend to cluster feed (i.e., could feed hourly at certain times of day) • "Early feeding cues are: rooting, hand-to-mouth movements, moving his head as if searching for your breast, stirring or stretching. Crying is a late sign of hunger." • You cannot spoil your baby by following their cues; you are simply responding to their needs." • Refer families to: <u>Breastfeeding Matters: An Important Guide to Breastfeeding for Women and their Families</u> (booklet) on the <u>Best Start Resource Centre</u> (website). 	
36 weeks	<p><u>How to hand express</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning how to hand express breast milk is an important skill. • Hand expression often increases parental confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Parents who hand express in the first 24 hours after birth make more milk. Give this milk to your baby by spoon." • Press, compress, relax. • View hand expression videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Hand Expression of Breastmilk</u> (Standord Medicine) ▪ <u>How to Express Breastmilk</u> (Global Health Media) ▪ <u>A Video on Hand Expressing Breastmilk</u> (Healthy Families BC) 	
38 weeks	<p><u>Community breastfeeding supports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other supports do you know of in the community? • Do you have parent-to-parent support? • Ask for help as you and your baby learn to breastfeed – you can do this! It can take a few weeks to feel comfortable with breastfeeding. • If needed, seek help right away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask, "What community supports can you access before and after birth?" • Make supportive statements such as, "I want to support you. If I don't know the answers we can work together to find them for you." • "A reminder, there is nothing like breast milk and breastfeeding for both you and your baby." • "There are many ways that a parent/support person can connect with your baby such as holding skin-to-skin, bathing and playing." 	
40 weeks	<p><u>Reviewing your feeding plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can create a breastfeeding plan to help guide you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You can write out a breastfeeding plan. " • Refer families to: <u>Breastfeeding Resources Ontario</u> (website). • "It is your human right to breastfeeding anytime, anywhere." 	

Websites:

Resource	Web Link	Description
211 Ontario	211ontario.ca	Web portal and helpline that provides accurate and up-to-date information about health services
Best Start Resource Centre	beststart.org	Web portal which provides multi-media resources in multiple languages
Bilingual Online Ontario Breastfeeding Services Database	ontariobreastfeeds.ca	Provincial directory of breastfeeding services
Breastfeeding Resources Ontario	breastfeedingresourcesontario.ca	Centralized source of quality, evidence-informed resources that support the Baby-Friendly Initiative (e.g. breastfeeding plans; hand expression videos; soother/pacifier use)
Caring for Kids	caringforkids.cps.ca	Site developed by the Canadian Pediatric Society that provides parents with information about their child's and teen's health and well-being
Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program	cmnrp.ca	Breastfeeding resources and practical information for health care providers and expecting/new parents
La Leche League Canada	lllc.ca	Breastfeeding information and support
OMama	omama.com	Website and app that connects women and families to trusted, evidence-informed healthy pregnancy, birth and early parenting information for Ontario
Ottawa Breastfeeds	ottawabreastfeeds.ca	Breastfeeding information and support in the Ottawa region
Prenatal Education Key Messages for Ontario	ontarioprenataleducation.ca	Evidence-based online tool that identifies universal key messages for service providers in Ontario
Public Health Unit Locator	phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/phulocator	Tool to find the nearest Public Health Unit
Renfrew County Breastfeeds	renfrewcountybreastfeeds.ca	Breastfeeding information and support in Renfrew County
Thehealthline.ca	thehealthline.ca	Web portal that provides accurate and up-to-date information about health services

To download this document and other breastfeeding resources for families and health care providers, visit the CMNRP website: www.cmnrp.ca