



## The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Hospital Breastfeeding Policy Maternity Staff Training Program

Birth Practices and Breastfeeding  
Session 5



Larry Hogan, Governor  
Royal R. Fisher, Lt. Governor  
Van Mitchell, Secretary, DHMH




UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
UPPER CHESAPEAKE MEDICAL CENTER  
MEMBER OF UPPER CHESAPEAKE HEALTH

### Objectives

- › Identify labor and birth practices that support breastfeeding
- › Recognize birth practices that can interfere with breastfeeding
- › Discuss the importance of early skin-to-skin contact
- › Discuss ways to foster early initiation of breastfeeding
- › Identify ways to support breastfeeding after a Cesarean birth

### Birth Practices That Support Breastfeeding


- › Support person or doula during labor
- › Encourage comfortable birthing positions and ambulation
- › Food or drink during labor
- › Encourage non-medicated births
- › Keep mother and baby together



Source: United States Breastfeeding Committee

### Birth Practices That Interfere With Breastfeeding Success


- › Pitocin use
  - Lower Apgar scores
  - Increased anxiety and pain
  - Inhibits oxytocin release
  - Fluid retention
- › Overhydration with IV fluids
  - Breast edema
  - Difficulty latching
  - Increased newborn weight loss



Source: University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center


### Labor Pain Management

- › All pain relief medications cross the placenta
  - Peripheral IV
  - Epidurals
- › Timing of analgesia is important
- › Complications
- › Non-medicated pain relief



### Other Procedures That Can Interfere With Breastfeeding

- › Forceps and vacuum extraction
- › Episiotomy
- › Gastric and vigorous suctioning
- › Eye prophylaxis before the first hour
- › Separating mother and baby
  - Bathing newborn at delivery
  - Swaddling and wrapping newborn
  - Taking newborn to nursery for assessments or procedures



Source: United States Breastfeeding Committee

### Skin-to-Skin

- › Place babies skin-to-skin
  - Immediately following birth
  - Uninterrupted for first hour
  - No clothing between mother and baby
  - Dry infant while on mother's chest
  - Until first breastfeeding completed
  - All infants, regardless of feeding plan



Source: United States Breastfeeding Committee

### Immediate Post-Delivery



Source: United States Breastfeeding Committee

### Initiating Breastfeeding

- › Assisting with the first feeding
  - Pre-feeding behaviors
    - Short rest periods
  - Feeding cues
    - Hands to mouth
    - Licking
    - Sucking motions
    - Touching nipple
  - Moving towards the breast
  - Finding the nipple



Source: © iStock.com, A. P. Mason

### Skin-to-Skin



### Skin-to-Skin Video



Source: University of Maryland System, Chesapeake Medical Center. Used with permission.

### Benefits of Skin-to-Skin

- › Increases duration of breastfeeding
- › Warms and colonizes baby
- › More quickly stabilizes vital signs
- › Provides antibody protection through colostrum
- › Babies learn to suckle more effectively
- › Improves developmental outcomes

## Barriers and Solutions to Skin-to-Skin

- ▶ Concerns of cold stress
- ▶ Baby needs
  - Exam
  - Bath
- ▶ Insufficient staff
- ▶ Mother needs
  - Tired
  - Perineum repair



Source: United States Breastfeeding Commission

## Cesarean Delivery

- ▶ Maternal disappointment in birthing process
  - Unexpected or unplanned
  - Separation from newborn
- ▶ Impact on breastfeeding
  - Delay in Lactogenesis II
  - Newborn lethargic
  - Suctioning of infant
  - Delay in early contact
  - Separation

## Supporting Breastfeeding After Cesarean Birth

- ▶ Assist mother with skin-to-skin as soon after the delivery as possible
- ▶ Assist mother to find positions that are comfortable
  - Laid-back (biological nurturing)
  - Side lying
  - Clutch/football



Source: A. Wilson-Cook, A. Hoover

## Infants Who Do Not Self-Attach

- ▶ Observe infants closely for feeding cues
- ▶ Routine interval
- ▶ Assessment of infant by physician
- ▶ Limit visitors



Source: United States Breastfeeding Commission

## Conclusion

- ▶ Baby-friendly practices support women whether or not they are breastfeeding
  - Support during labor
  - Skin-to-skin
- ▶ Respect a mother wishes
- ▶ Replacement feedings, if applicable



Source: United States Breastfeeding Commission

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