

EJGH

*Woman  
& Child*

SERVICES



Nurturing the  
Mother-Baby Bond

East Jefferson General Hospital

# East Jefferson General Hospital

At East Jefferson General Hospital, it is our priority to support and guide you as you make decisions for yourself and your newborn. Woman & Child Services is dedicated to offering an optimal level of care that is family-centered. Our outstanding physicians and highly credentialed nurses are committed to providing both sophisticated and compassionate care by incorporating the latest evidence-based research. One of our goals is to provide every mother with the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding her baby. Breastfeeding your baby is a gift that will last a lifetime and will allow you to make beautiful memories. This book provides tips and tools to help ensure that you and your newborn have a wonderful experience.

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## Natural pain relief during labor

The experience of labor and pain from contractions are different for each woman and the sources and sensations of pain can be different throughout the phases of labor. Confidence and believing in your ability to give birth is a huge factor in how you manage labor pain. Non-pharmacological methods of pain relief can be very effective during labor and childbirth. Birthing techniques such as hypnobirthing, patterned breathing, relaxation and visualization can increase the production of endorphins and relieve pain. Other therapeutic methods such as massage, emptying the bladder, birthing balls and change of position can naturally relax the central nervous system, lessening the sensation of labor contractions.

EJGH offers a variety of classes and seminars that help mothers prepare and make decisions about their individual birthing plans.

Classes include:

- *Belly to Baby*
- *Healthy Birth Practices*
- *Hypnobirthing*
- *Lamaze*

For dates, times and descriptions of any of these classes and more, please visit us at [www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles](http://www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles) or call HealthFinder at **504-456-5000** to register.

### DID YOU KNOW?

*Research shows that medications & anesthesia in labor can decrease infant alertness, affecting infant's ability and readiness to feed.*

## Safe birthing practices

The risks and perceived benefits of elective induction (inducing labor without medical reason) should be carefully weighed before making that decision. Research indicates that elective inductions before 39 weeks can pose significant health risks to infants. In the last weeks of pregnancy, a baby's lungs and brain are rapidly developing, so babies born prior to their due dates can have difficulty breathing and higher rates of infection. In addition, babies born before 39 weeks are at greater risk of learning and behavioral problems later in life.

Research also has shown that elective labor induction can increase the chance of a Cesarean birth (also known as a C-section). If a woman's body has not naturally begun the labor process and the cervix has not softened enough, induction may lead to a prolonged, unproductive labor that may result in a Cesarean birth. Although C-sections have become quite commonplace, the procedure is a major surgery, posing a host of potential risks to mother and child and prolonging the mother's recovery time.

## The facts about Cesarean birth

Like all surgeries, there are (inherent) risks involved in having a C-section. A C-section raises the risk of infection, excessive bleeding and organ and tissue damage. It also takes longer for the mother to recover from a C-section than from a vaginal birth. C-sections can put babies at greater risk for breathing problems and chronic health issues such as asthma, diabetes and obesity.

In the U.S., one in three women now has a Cesarean birth. Experts agree that this number is far too high. Delay in childbearing, the rising obesity rate among moms-to-be, and an increase in multiple birth deliveries are several contributing factors. However, an increase in the number of elective inductions is thought to be the biggest factor as to why, nationwide, our C-section rates are at an all-time high. Additionally, moms-to-be are requesting to have their baby delivered via C-section. It is important to discuss your options with your healthcare provider and to understand that a Cesarean birth is not just another delivery option. Try to gather as much information as possible and look at the facts.

If a woman is having a C-section, it should be because the benefits outweigh the risks, and there are some circumstances in which a C-section is a better option than a vaginal birth. For instance, when a baby is in the transverse position (laying side-to-side) in the belly or when the placenta is covering the cervix (a condition called placenta previa which could cause hemorrhaging during vaginal childbirth) a C-section is always necessary. Depending on the type of pregnancy and labor a woman is having, a C-section may also be preferred in the case of a breech baby that does not turn or when the baby's heart rate becomes abnormal during labor.

### *Some tips to help prevent a C-section include:*

- Educate yourself and your partner about labor and birth
- Know your options and ask questions
- Use medications and interventions wisely
- Wait for labor to start on its own – plan to go to the hospital only once you are in active labor
- Have continuous labor support
- Ask your doctor about options if your baby is in the breech position or if you have had a previous Cesarean birth
- Plan an induction ONLY if there is medical cause



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*EJGH was the first hospital in the region to embrace the 39-week initiative to end all pre-term, elective births. This proactive change resulted in a 20 percent reduction in the number of babies requiring care in the NICU.*

## Early skin-to-skin contact

Early skin-to-skin contact begins immediately after birth and should last for at least the first hour or until the baby breastfeeds. Skin-to-skin is when the newborn baby is placed directly onto the mother's bare chest. This contact allows mother and baby to exchange touch, smell and warmth. It also calms the baby and helps him to feel safe. The benefits of skin-to-skin continue after birth and throughout the early weeks of your baby's life.

*Practicing skin-to-skin may also help your baby:*

- Remain calm and cry less
- Regulate his body temperature more easily
- Maintain a normal heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure and blood sugar level
- Breastfeed exclusively and breastfeed longer
- Achieve a better, more effective latch
- Indicate when he is ready to feed

Dads can also provide benefits to baby through skin-to-skin contact. Babies know the sound of his voice which will help him to feel calm, safe and loved.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*Touch is one of your baby's most advanced senses at birth. Your baby's sense of touch develops from head to toe, making her mouth one of the most sensitive areas on her body, which is why babies tend to put everything in their mouths.*

*Skin-to-skin contact benefits ALL babies, even in cases of Cesarean delivery.*



## Rooming-in on a 24-hours basis

Rooming-in allows mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day—a practice that has been shown in recent years to have many physical and psychological benefits for mother and child. For one, rooming-in makes breastfeeding easier. Studies indicate that mothers make more milk, faster and are more likely to breastfeed exclusively and for longer than mothers who are separated from their babies or who send their babies to the nursery at night.

Babies also benefit from rooming-in. Typically, they cry less than babies who are kept in the nursery. Babies who stay with their mothers are also more likely to gain weight faster, sleep quietly between feedings and soothe more easily.

Research shows that mothers who have their babies in their room get the same amount and quality of sleep as mothers who send their babies to the nursery. Statistics also show that breastfeeding moms get more and better sleep than formula feeding moms. A mother's rest is more often disturbed by visitors than by her baby, so try to limit distractions. Enjoy this time as you and your baby learn and get to know one another.

## Benefits of breastfeeding for baby

- Higher IQ scores
- Protection against disease
- Protection against obesity
- Fewer allergies/ asthma
- Fewer digestive problems
- The comfort of being close to mom

The American Academy of Pediatrics (A.A.P.) advises that human milk should be fed exclusively for the first six months of a baby's life. Breast milk should then be supplemented with solid foods for the first year of life or more.

Breast milk provides your baby with all of the nutrition he or she needs for healthy growth and development during the first six months of life, and it is healthier for your baby than any other food or liquid. During the first year of life, breast milk continues to provide your baby with nutrition, disease protection and comfort while you slowly introduce solid foods. Beyond the first year, many mothers choose to continue breastfeeding for another year or longer. Studies show that the longer a baby breastfeeds the more long term benefit he or she receives.

### *Breastfed babies have higher intelligence scores*

According to the A.A.P., human milk (as opposed to cow's milk or formula) is biologically designed to promote human brain growth, so babies can learn to analyze their environments and participate in complex, social interactions. This is thought to be a contributing factor in research indicating breastfed babies score higher on cognitive tests than formula fed babies. Studies also suggest premature babies receive more cognitive benefits from breast milk than full-term babies and that scores continue to increase the longer breast milk is used.

### *Breast milk protects babies from a wide range of health problems and diseases, including:*

- Asthma
- Bacterial meningitis
- Type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- Diarrhea
- Hodgkin's disease
- Inner ear infections
- Intestinal tissues
- Late-onset sepsis in preterm infants
- Leukemia
- Lymphoma
- Obesity
- Respiratory tract infection
- SIDS
- Urinary tract infection

## DID YOU KNOW?

*The American Academy of Pediatrics (A.A.P.) states that human milk is “species-specific” and recommends babies be fed human milk exclusively for the first six months, to be followed by a mixture of solid foods and breast milk at least until the end of the baby’s first year or longer.*



## DID YOU KNOW?

*The first human milk bank was established in 1911.*

## Benefits of breastfeeding for moms and families

There are also advantages to breastfeeding for mom, especially in those early months when feedings occur every two hours. Because there are no bottles to warm or sterilize, breastfeeding saves time. Milk is always available and is at just the right temperature.

Cost savings is another factor for a lot of families. Expenses associated with a newborn can be shocking and add up quickly. When the cost of hospital bills, diapers, baby clothes and other necessary supplies start to pile up, knowing you can produce the best, most nutritious food for your baby for free, can be a relief.

In addition, mothers who breastfeed may see the following health benefits:

- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis
- Reduced incidences of breast and ovarian cancers
- Lowered risk of maternal postpartum depression
- Speedier return to pre-pregnancy weight
- Decreased bleeding
- Quicker return of the uterus to pre-pregnancy size

## Early initiation of breastfeeding

According to the A.A.P., breastfeeding should begin as soon as possible after birth, usually within the first hour. Newborns should be nursed whenever they show signs of hunger—approximately 8-12 times every 24 hours. The amount of time for each feeding varies widely for each baby. Some babies may nurse for as few as 10 minutes, while others nurse for 45 minutes.

### *The first few days*

The first milk your baby will get is a thick, sticky liquid called colostrum. Although it may not seem like your baby is getting enough milk, colostrum is all she needs to meet her nutritional requirements for the first few days.

As your baby continues to nurse and her stomach expands, the composition of your milk will change so that it has more water volume and a whitish color. In fact, as your baby grows, your milk will continue to change to meet her specific needs.

## Effective positioning and attachment

Hold your baby close, tummy to tummy. Make sure you support her back and that her ears, shoulders and hips are all in alignment. With her nose level with your nipple, you can gently tickle her upper lip, which will stimulate her to open her mouth wide for nursing. When your baby's mouth opens wide, press her chin into your breast. This will allow your baby to tip her head back so she can open her mouth wider. When her mouth is open, bring your baby to your breast. There will be much more of the darker skin visible above your baby's top lip than below her bottom lip. Your baby's cheeks should look full and rounded as she nurses.

Remember, breastfeeding should feel comfortable. Certified lactation specialists at EJGH are happy to provide assistance with all of your breastfeeding needs and questions.

## Baby-led feeding

Be aware and responsive to your baby's feeding cues. Experts agree that it's best to feed your baby whenever she signals that she's hungry. You should expect to feed your newborn at least 8-12 times within a 24-hour period. Some babies may want to nurse more often than that. You should allow your baby to nurse every time she shows cues of being hungry. This will help to establish the appropriate milk supply for your baby. You should not try to put your baby on a feeding schedule. Ignoring feeding cues can lead to a diminished milk supply and a discontented baby. If your baby is very sleepy or ill, you may have to wake her up to feed her.

Crying is usually the last indication that your baby is hungry. Keep your baby close so you can observe her cues before she gets to the point of crying.

*Feeding cues include:*

- Moving her eyes rapidly
- Putting her fingers in her mouth
- Rooting (opening her mouth as though she were about to breastfeed)
- Becoming restless

When feeding your baby, let her nurse as long as she wants on the first breast. This allows your baby to get the watery portion of your breast milk, called the foremilk which quenches her thirst. It also allows her to get the fattier milk called the hind milk, which helps to keep her full longer. When she releases or falls asleep, she is finished with that breast. Burp your baby and then offer her the second breast. She may not nurse as long on this breast, so begin with this breast at the next feeding.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

*EJGH is a recipient of the Golden Gift Award for continuous commitment to breastfeeding and quality improvement.*

**HELPFUL TIP**

*All babies should be fed whenever they show signs of being hungry, and not according to any kind of schedule.*

## Frequency of feeding in relation to establishing milk supply

During the first two weeks after delivery, your breasts are developing milk-making tissue. Frequent feedings increase the production of these tissues. This time will assure you can produce enough milk in the future.

After the first two weeks, regulation of your milk supply is based on supply and demand. Your body will make as much as your baby needs so continue to feed on your baby's cues. Conversely, if you skip a feeding, your supply may diminish and it may take a day or so of regular feedings or additional feeding to get your supply back up.

Babies go through growth spurts at which time they will feed very frequently for three days. Your supply will increase to meet demand. Growth spurts typically occur at 10 days, three weeks, six weeks, three months, and six months.

## Pacifiers and artificial nipples for breastfeeding infants

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends against the use of pacifiers or bottles until breastfeeding is well established, usually for the first three to four weeks after birth. Pacifiers and bottles require a different sucking skill than nursing does, which can cause nipple confusion when introduced before breastfeeding is well established. Your baby may not be able to latch properly on your breast after sucking on a pacifier or bottle. In addition, a pacifier may satisfy a baby's urge to suck when he should be nursing. This can interfere with your milk supply and your baby's ability to gain weight. Avoiding pacifiers and artificial nipples during the first few weeks after birth, or until breastfeeding is well established, can help protect your milk supply as well as promote healthy weight gain for your baby.



### DID YOU KNOW?

*Growth spurts typically occur at 10 days, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.*

## Only breast milk for the first six months

Not only is breast milk the best, most nutritious food, feeding your baby breast milk exclusively for the first six months of life provides a powerful defense against disease. Infants do not develop a mature immune system until they are about six months old, so the antibodies a baby receives exclusively from breast milk are crucial to help fend off bacteria, viruses and infections. This makes breast milk particularly important for working moms who plan to enroll their infants in daycare. Considering that most maternity leave is maxed out at 12 weeks or sooner, the antibodies in breast milk can be the difference between having a baby who adapts easily to daycare and one who struggles with ear infections, diarrhea and colds. (An added benefit for parents and the workplace is less absenteeism and higher productivity, since parents of healthy babies spend less time at home and at the doctor's office.)

### DID YOU KNOW?

*Babies do not go into a deep state of sleep until 20–30 minutes after they fall asleep. If baby wakes when you put him down, try holding and rocking him for about 20 minutes first.*

## Continuing to provide breast milk after introducing complementary foods

It is important to continue providing breast milk for your baby even after you start to introduce solid foods. You can keep your milk supply up and continue breastfeeding by offering breast milk before a solid “meal”. When you first begin to introduce foods, your baby will still get most of her nutrition from your milk. As she grows older, you can increase meals. Most babies will have one solid meal at six months, two at seven months, three at eight months and three meals plus snacks at nine months. You can continue to breastfeed before meals and upon waking throughout this period.

Breast milk provides babies with valuable nutrients that protect against disease and promotes healthy digestion and nervous system development for as long as the baby is breastfed. The benefits of breastfeeding can go on long past the first year of a baby's life and should be continued as long as it is desired by both mother and child.

## Back to work and breastfeeding

Mothers everywhere have found that they can continue to give their babies the important health benefits of breast milk even after they return to work. Re-entering the workforce after giving birth can be a big adjustment for both mother and baby, so it helps to be prepared, especially if you plan to pump.

Purchasing a good, quality breast pump may be your best strategy for efficiently removing your milk during the workday. Electric pumps that allow you to express milk from both breasts at the same time reduce pumping time. Although the upfront cost of an electric breast pump can be pricey, all breastfeeding supplies are tax deductible and the cost of a pump is far less than the cost of many months' worth of formula. In addition, many insurance companies now offer free or discounted electric breast pumps to nursing mothers, so be sure to find out what your plan covers.

In the first months of life, babies need to breastfeed 8-12 times in 24 hours. So you need to express and store milk during those usual feeding times when you are away from your baby. The number of times you need to express milk at work should be equal to the number of feedings your baby will need while you are away. As the baby gets older, the number of feedings may decrease. When babies are around six months old and begin solid foods, they often need to nurse or bottle feed less often.

Most women find they can schedule breast pumping sessions at work during their morning and afternoon breaks and lunchtime. Unfortunately, expressing milk is not as easy as turning on the faucet and some women find they have difficulty emptying their breasts with a pump.

### HELPFUL TIP

*Before returning to work, tell your childcare provider that it is important for you to continue breastfeeding. Their support will make it easier for you.*

Some tricks to help better milk expression include:

- Find a comfortable, relaxing place to pump, free from interruptions.
- Bring a picture or your baby or a favorite item that smells like your baby.
- Bring a recording of your baby's coos or cries.
- Nurse your baby at lunchtime if possible.
- Nurse your baby as soon as the two of you are reunited.
- If possible, go back to work part time at first, to keep your milk supply up.

Remember, a happy, healthy mom is the very best thing for your baby. Many women who cannot pump during the day or find they cannot pump enough to feed their babies all day, are happy to supplement breast milk with formula. These women nurse in the evenings when they are home with their babies and all day on the weekends, while providing formula only in their absence.

## DID YOU KNOW?

*The Healthcare Reform Act requires companies with more than 50 employees to provide a reasonable break time and non-bathroom rooms for women to express milk during the first year of a child's life.*



## Family Support

Mothers rely on the people closest to them for support with breastfeeding, especially when they return to work. One of the best ways partners, spouses and family members can support a new mom in her breastfeeding efforts is to get educated about the benefits of breastfeeding. In addition to familiarizing themselves with the information in this booklet, partners can attend breastfeeding classes. Learning the facts about breastfeeding can help partners understand the needs of both mother and child.

It is important that support persons respect the new mom's desire to breastfeed. In order to allow her experience to be positive and successful, family members and partners should not offer the baby nipples, pacifiers or bottles. Partners, spouses and family members can be a tremendous help by taking care of other important duties.

They can:

- Hold, rock and read to baby
- Bathe and dress baby
- Prepare the baby's diaper bag each day
- Clean out breast pump parts each day
- Help with household chores such as laundry, cooking and cleaning
- Care for other siblings
- Remind mom to rest and eat healthy foods so that she will have more energy
- Provide love and emotional support
- Tell mom they are proud of her for giving her baby such a healthy start in life
- Encourage mom to get help if she has questions or concerns with breastfeeding
- Get baby ready to breastfeed

### HELPFUL TIP

*Try not to give baby a full feed if mom will be home within an hour or two. She may be feeling full and want to breastfeed right away.*



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*You cannot spoil babies by holding them. Holding babies helps them become more independent later in life because their need for closeness is met while they are young.*

## The Breastfeeding Center

at East Jefferson General Hospital  
504-454-4323

EJGH is dedicated to the promotion and support of breastfeeding as the standard for optimal infant health and development. By providing women with specialized educational programs, information and one-on-one assistance, we have established ourselves as one of the premier hospitals for breastfeeding support in the state. Since 2007, East Jefferson has distinguished itself as a certified GIFT facility. This signifies success in meeting the criteria as documented in the "Ten Steps to a Healthy, Breastfed Baby." The IBCLC Care Award is a second recognition. This award is given to hospitals that staff International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) as part of the care team.

The Breastfeeding Center is open seven days a week to offer guidance and support during and after pregnancy. We offer a full suite of supplies including breast pumps, which are available for purchase or rental, for short term or long term needs. Call **504-454-4323** with any breastfeeding questions.

## Educational opportunities for families

EJGH HealthFinder: 504-456-5000  
[www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles](http://www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles)

EJGH Woman & Child Services offers a large variety of courses to help new moms through every aspect of pregnancy and parenthood. Our classes are taught by registered nurses, certified lactation consultants and other health professionals. They are designed so that you can feel confident and prepared for pregnancy, childbirth and all of the ups and downs that come with raising a family.

We offer classes on breastfeeding, Lamaze, prenatal topics, nutrition and fitness, newborn essentials, infant CPR, sibling preparation and much more.

Courses are held on campus at East Jefferson General Hospital as well as at the Destination Maternity Learning Studio, on N. Causeway Blvd. in Metairie. For dates, times and descriptions of any of our classes or events, please visit us online at [www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles](http://www.ejgh.org/healthylifestyles) or call HealthFinder at **504-456-5000** to register.



## Woman and Child newsletter

[www.ejgh.org/womanandchild](http://www.ejgh.org/womanandchild)

Woman and Child's free e-newsletter is a valuable source of information through the pregnancy journey and the first year of parenthood. By signing up, you will receive information every week about your pregnancy. Once your baby is born, you will continue to receive weekly updates on your baby's milestones, answers to common questions and concerns and the latest research findings that affect your baby's development. To subscribe, go to the Woman & Child Services home page at **[www.ejgh.org/womanandchild](http://www.ejgh.org/womanandchild)**.

## The Woman & Child Boutique

**EJGH 4th Floor** (Near the Hudson Garage Entrance)

**Open Monday - Friday from 9:00am – 3:30pm**

**504-780-5992**

The Woman & Child Boutique offers perfect gifts for new moms and babies. Registered nurses are happy to help new mothers with all of their breastfeeding needs, including stylish nursing attire, custom-fitted bras, breast pumps for rental or purchase and supplies. Infant clothing, accessories and nursery keepsakes are also available.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*The La Leche League, an organization dedicated to helping women breastfeed, held its first meeting in 1957.*

*To find a local La Leche League meeting, visit [www.lllmlsla.org](http://www.lllmlsla.org)*



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Woman and Child Services

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