

Breastfeeding Support



How does the WIC Nutrition Program support breastfeeding mothers and babies?

Breastfeeding provides optimal nutrition for infants, promotes maternal and infant bonding, and provides protection from illness and obesity. WIC encourages all pregnant women to breastfeed and provides opportunity for pregnant mothers to discuss their feeding plan at each visit. WIC provides breastfeeding anticipatory guidance, educational materials, breastfeeding peer counselors, encouragement to take breastfeeding classes offered in the community, and breastfeeding follow up after delivery. Breastfeeding peer counselors provide basic breastfeeding education, peer-to-peer support and referrals to healthcare providers when needed. All WIC nutrition staff receive training on breastfeeding support in the WIC clinic and are available to provide support. Referrals to IBCLCs and health care providers are made when more complex breastfeeding challenges arise outside the scope of practice of WIC staff. All WIC programs also have access to manual and electric breast pumps that are available to breastfeeding mothers at no charge.

How is breastfeeding supported by the WIC food package?

- The enhanced breastfeeding food package encourages mothers to exclusively breastfeed their babies.
- If mostly or exclusively breastfeeding, mothers can receive food benefits until the infant is 1 year of age.
- All breastfeeding mothers are encouraged to exclusively breastfeed for the first month to establish adequate milk supply and a good latch.
- Formula is not routinely issued to breastfeeding babies in the first month of life. This includes babies who are partially breastfed.

How can I support a breastfeeding mom whose infant needs supplementation?

If the mother is willing and able, encourage her to give her baby expressed breastmilk:

- Let the mother know WIC has manual, single user pumps and electric pumps for loan.
- Inform the mother of the amount of expressed breastmilk the baby needs after breastfeeding, and the length of time you anticipate this will be needed. Physicians are encouraged to fax infant measurements and supplementation plans to the local WIC agency.
- Complete a [Request for Special Formula Form](#) if the infant has a qualifying condition and needs a special formula.
- Refer the mother to WIC and encourage her to set up an appointment by providing the link to our [online pre application](#) or faxing to 603-271-4779.

*For more information or to speak with the WIC breastfeeding coordinator, please call 1-800-942-4321.
The breastfeeding coordinator is available to provide WIC in-services for physicians and nurses.*

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