In the Park, In the Cafe.

You can breastfeed anywhere!

What could be more natural?
Becoming a mum...

This actually begins way before the birth of your baby. As your bump grows so does your baby inside. Ultrasound scans have shown us that your baby will yawn, exercise, move about to get comfortable, grimace, have rapid eye movements, sleep and suck their thumbs. It’s amazing to think that they can do all of this while inside your tummy, so think how important it is to start developing a relationship with your baby now.

From about 20 weeks your baby can respond to sound and they can actually recognise voices, especially yours and your partners. There are lots of things you can do to communicate with your baby even while they are still inside your tummy;

• Talking to your baby.
• Singing to your baby.
• Playing music – try soft, gentle music when you are settling for a sleep.
• Get your partner to join in too as your baby will recognise their voice too.

It’s lovely to rub your “bump” and watch him move – what makes them kick or move around? Have you thought about what your baby will look like – try and imagine this if you haven’t already. Lots of mums-to-be have nick names for their bump too.
Your baby’s brain will be developing all the time and high levels of stress hormones like cortisol can restrict the brain from developing. Being stressed, anxious or depressed can all increase your cortisol levels so it is good to talk to someone if you feel you are very stressed. Becoming a mum can be very worrying so it’s great to talk to others about your feelings, fears and expectations.

**Breastfeeding**

When you are pregnant you get lots and lots of information and sometimes it is hard to read everything that you are given. Breastfeeding is a skill which has to be learned by both you and your baby. Your baby will instinctively know that he has to feed when he is born but may take some time to work out how to do this effectively. You will also know what you need to do but haven’t had the opportunity before the birth to try this skill out. Remember what it was like to ride a bike? Breastfeeding needs practice from both you and your new baby.

As a new mum here are some things you can ask for or try:

- Skin to skin contact after birth until after your first feed.
- Ensure you get some help with your first and second feed which should be within 6 hours of the first.
- Always ring the buzzer in the hospital for help if you are struggling at all.
• Don’t go home until you feel that you can effectively position and attach your baby, most problems happen due to ineffective positioning and attachment.
• Try not to give any supplementary feeds while in hospital and at home until your breastfeeding is established – same with using a dummy.
• If you feel you have a problem seek specialist help immediately.
• Waking every 2 – 3 hours at night is normal, sleeping all night isn’t.
• Prolonged pain throughout or at the end of a feed is abnormal, but some discomfort when your baby starts feeding can be very normal in the early days.
• Always get your baby weighed on day 3.
• Consent to a peer supporter, they are there for everyone - you don’t need a problem to use this service.
• Be selective with visitors – they usually haven’t been up a lot of the night!

Vitamin D

All pregnant women in the UK are advised to take 10mcg (micrograms) of vitamin D per day.

If you are entitled to Healthy Start vouchers then vitamin supplements are available free of charge.

If you are not entitled to Healthy Start vouchers you can buy Healthy Start vitamins from your local participating pharmacist.
Why Breastfeed?

The benefits of breastfeeding for your baby

Breastfeeding reduces;
- the incidence of gastrointestinal and respiratory infections (tummy and breathing)
- ear infections
- the incidence of juvenile-onset diabetes
- the risk of obesity
- urinary infections
- the incidence of asthma and eczema

• Improves speech development.
• Better development, especially in preterm babies, of the brain, central nervous system and sight.
• Research has shown breastfed babies have 15% less GP admissions.
• Better ability to fight infections.
• Lower blood pressure in later childhood.
• May reduce the risk of some childhood cancers.
• May increase your baby’s IQ.
• Nutritionally balanced to meet your baby’s needs - easily digested.

The benefits of breastfeeding for you

Reduces the risk of;
- breast cancer
- ovarian cancer
- osteoporosis
• Perfect for your baby - no need to prepare or buy equipment.
• Always ready and can be done anytime, anywhere, any place - you can now breastfeed in any public place due to the Breastfeeding (Scotland) Act 2005.
• Helps with bonding with your baby.

Look out for this sticker in windows of public places, it shows that a business actively supports breastfeeding and has signed up to our Breastfeeding Welcome Sticker Scheme.

You can find a list of participating premises on our website 📘 www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/yourhealth/pages/breastfeeding.aspx
Breastfeeding Peer Support

Who are we?
We are mums living throughout NHS Highland, who have breastfed our babies. Some of us have breastfed with little or no problems, while some of us have overcome breastfeeding problems to continue breastfeeding for as long as we wanted. We support women to initiate and sustain breastfeeding.

We are volunteers who are unpaid and who complement the professional service you get from NHS Highland.

The Breastfeeding Support Service is informal and works in partnership with local health professionals.

Our training
We have been trained by NHS Highland with a focus on breastfeeding support. Our breastfeeding training programme is the same as the Health Visitor and Midwives training this is to reduce the amount of conflicting advice you are given. We have been screened by NHS Highland and adhere to their policies and procedures.
What do we offer?
All peers offer post-natal support. After the birth of your baby, your midwife will ask you if it is okay to give us your contact details. If you agree, we will contact you by phone to determine the level of support you would like. Some peers take part in local parent education classes. If you require face to face support we can offer this through our breastfeeding support groups. Alternatively we could make arrangements to meet with you. You don’t need to have a problem to contact us.

Our aim
Our overall aim is to share our experience and knowledge around practical aspects of breastfeeding, no matter how old your baby is. We offer you reassurance and confidence to breastfeed for as long as you wish.

How can you find us?
Before baby comes;
• Parentcraft classes
• Local Peer Support Groups
• Facebook - Highland Ante-natal Breastfeeding Chat, which discusses subjects such as skin to skin, building early relationships with your bump and baby, sleep and breastfeeding.
• Facebook - Highland Breastfeeding Support

After the baby has arrived;
• Local Peer Support Groups
• Your local Midwife or Health Visitor
• Facebook - Highland Breastfeeding Support
• Facebook - Highland Breastfeeding Support Chat
Skin to Skin

Your midwife will have explained the benefits of having skin to skin contact with your baby.

Skin to skin contact is beneficial for both you and your baby, regardless of how you intend to feed your baby.

If you are happy to have skin to skin contact, your baby will be dried and placed on your tummy. This will happen as soon as possible after delivery. It may be a good idea to wear an open shirt for your labour so it is easier to initiate skin to skin contact. The baby can then be covered with a warm dry towel. This will help to keep baby warm and to help prevent you feeling exposed. Staff will ask you if you would like your baby weighed prior to initiating prolonged skin to skin contact.

Skin to skin contact should continue uninterrupted for as long as you wish. It should go on at least until the baby demonstrates feeding cues and has his first feed. You can of course choose to end this contact when you decide. Skin to skin contact is fantastic for dads too, promoting bonding and development.
Make the most of this special time with your new baby. At no other time will you or your baby have such high levels of hormones and natural mothering and nurturing instincts. Your baby, like any mammal that is left for a sufficient length of time in a quiet, uninterrupted environment beside its mother will exhibit a set pattern of behaviour. You will be able to talk to your baby, stroke him and examine all his little fingers and toes reassuring yourself that all is well.

After a period of time your baby will show signs that he is ready to feed. These will include rooting, salivating and lifting his head in search of the breast. You will find a list of feeding cues in your postnatal breastfeeding booklet. Your midwife in the labour suite will offer help to initiate a breastfeed. She will help to position both you and your baby, to ensure a successful attachment at the breast. However if you are planning to formula feed your baby, a formula feed of your choice will be given in the labour suite during skin to skin contact. You and your baby have still received all the benefits of having this precious time together immediately after delivery.

Benefits of skin to skin for baby
- Keeps baby warm.
- Calms the baby, reduces crying and makes him feel secure.
- Regulates baby’s heart beat and breathing.
- Encourages a close loving relationship between mother and baby.
• Reduces the risk of low blood sugar as the baby is warmer and tends to be fed earlier when it exhibits feeding cues.
• Boosts a mother’s confidence in handling their baby.

Further benefits of skin to skin, if you choose to breastfeed
• Ensures milk supply is not delayed as feeding gets off to a good start. The sooner you start breastfeeding the better your milk supply will be. This in turn increases the success and duration of your breastfeeding experience.
• The baby will be colonised with your friendly bacteria which will help build up the baby’s immune system.
• There will be an increase in the hormone oxytocin. This makes your uterus contract which helps reduce the risk of heavy bleeding following delivery.
• The hormones that are circulated in your body after a breastfeed counteract the post delivery adrenaline and thus aid a more restful sleep.

Points to remember
Skin to skin contact may not be possible for everyone, e.g. if your baby is unwell or very premature. However skin to skin contact can be introduced gradually as your baby gets better. There are huge benefits of skin to skin for premature babies. Our Special Care Baby Unit in Raigmore is working hard on promoting this through Kangaroo care, you can ask about this at any time.
Even if you require a caesarian section to deliver your baby we will ensure skin to skin contact is initiated as soon as possible following your operation, this is usually on transfer to the high dependency unit. As long as your baby is in good health you will not be separated from your baby at any time. Theatre is an ideal place for dads to initiate skin to skin until mum is able to commence skin to skin.

Skin to skin is useful at any time in the postnatal period e.g. if your baby is fractious and unsettled. (This is relevant for a formula fed baby too.) The close contact and warmth from your body along with your rhythmic breathing and heart beat comforts and calms him and he feels secure.

If your baby is reluctant to feed he will also benefit from skin to skin. Your natural scent and tactile stimulation will help illicit his feeding cues and hopefully prompt him to feed.

Skin to skin can also help to raise the temperature of your baby if he is cold. The heat radiating from your body will bring his temperature up very quickly. Warm towels or blankets to cover you both will prevent over exposure.
Sleep

After questions about feeding, parent’s next questions are usually about sleep. Sleep is a developmental process. Popular knowledge about sleep patterns has been based on studies of formula fed babies which took place in the 1950s and 1960s and has led us to believe that baby’s should sleep through the night.

Nobody sleeps through the night; even adults wake briefly although we may not remember it. Everyone has a sleep cycle and this includes periods where our brains are active and process information. This is known as Rapid Eye Movement (REM) and periods where our brain is quiet and resting is known as Quiet sleep. You will notice when your baby is going through REM sleep as they may twitch or grimace, smile or blink. This REM sleep is vital for your baby to help facilitate the rapid growth of their brain.
Adults fall quickly into quiet sleep and then move onto REM and we have a cycle of sleep which lasts 90 minutes. Babies are different as they sleep mostly in REM sleep. When they fall asleep they first fall into REM sleep which means that they can easily be wakened. After about 20 minutes they will fall into Quiet sleep when they become less easy to be wakened. Babies sleep cycles are only about 60 minutes long. As babies mature the amount of time of REM sleep reduces and the Quiet sleep time increases.

It is important to remember that all babies are very different and it often takes several months for a baby’s day/night pattern of wake and sleep to become established.
In the first few weeks it is normal for babies to wake up frequently. On average they will wake every 2 – 3 hours as they have little tummies and breast milk is quickly digested. By the time babies are 3 months old some but not all will begin to sleep for about 5 hours per night. By 5 months half of them may have started to sleep for 8 hours. In reality, some babies will not sleep all night every night until they are close to a year old. One study found that 27% of babies had not regularly slept from 10pm – 6am by the age of 1 year and that 13% had not regularly slept through for 5 hours or more by the age of 1 year.


Things that may be useful;

- Have a short bedtime routine with a bath or wash, a wee story or song and a feed.
- Keep lights and stimulus low during the night.
- Remember it is normal for babies to wake and feed during the night during the first year of life.
- Try to catch up with sleep during the day when your baby is sleeping.

Thanks to Leslie Maclean – paediatric sleep practitioner

For more information
 Gesture www.isisonline.org.uk
UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative
All maternity units and community health visiting areas within NHS Highland have achieved full Baby Friendly status.

UNICEF have recently issued new standards and in the antenatal period you should expect the following:

- an educated workforce.
- an opportunity for a discussion about feeding your baby and recognising and responding to your baby’s needs.
- be encouraged to develop a positive relationship with your growing baby in-utero.

Infant Feeding Clinic
Runs in Raigmore Hospital for acute feeding problems. Antenatal women are welcome too if you have any concerns. We see antenatal women who;

- had a previous breastfeeding experience which had problems.
- have a BMI over 35.
- are on methadone (giving your baby breastmilk in the postnatal period can help to reduce withdrawal).

If you would like to make an appointment or discuss any concerns with the Infant Feeding Advisor please phone ☏ 01463 704790 to make an appointment with Louise.