



أصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية  
Breastfeeding Friends

المجلس الأعلى لشؤون الأسرة | Supreme Council For Family Affairs

# Breastfeeding Guide

Supporting Your Natural Choice

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**N.B. All pictures & diagrams in this booklet are for educational purposes only**

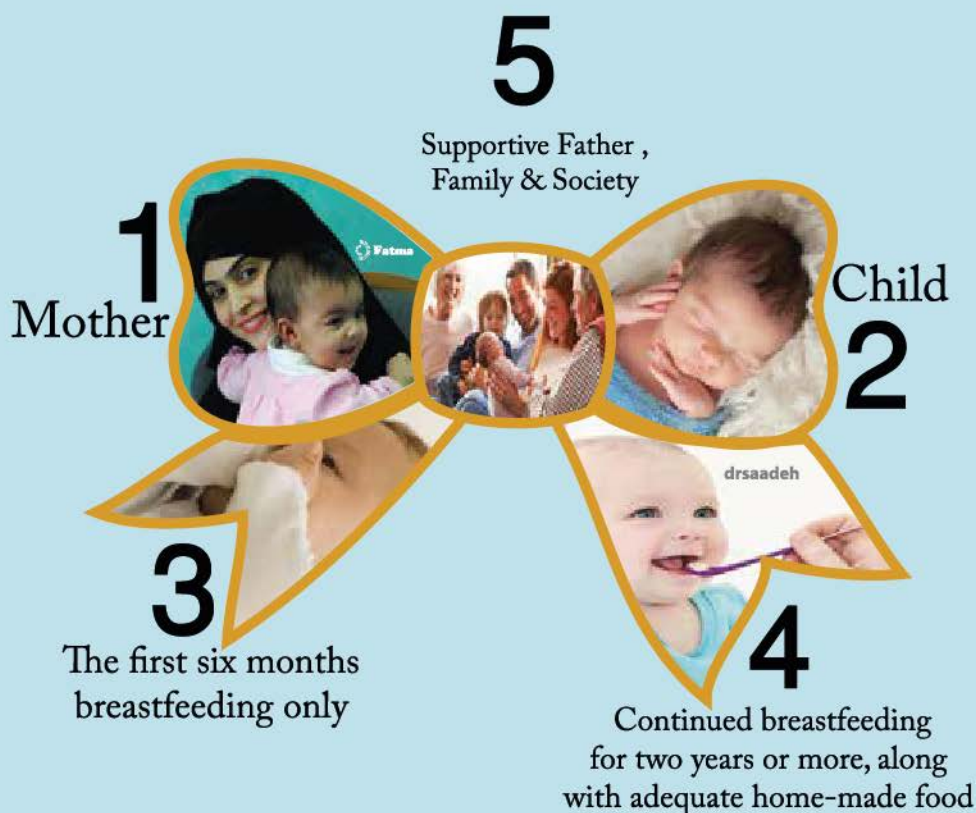
**This booklet is an updated version  
of the 2004, 2008, 2014 BFF Booklets**



# The Golden Bow\*



Breastfeeding .. The Gold Standard .. Any other option is inferior



\*Symbol for breastfeeding, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org))

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## Chapter 1 : ABOUT BREASTFEEDING FRIENDS SOCIETY

Breastfeeding Friends Society is a voluntary non-profit society operating in Sharjah since 2004 under the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, which is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Sharjah. Sheikha Budour bint Sultan Al Qasimi is Patron of the Society. The society was previously founded in 1999 by a group of breastfeeding supporters, in collaboration with the Maternal and Child Health Centre in Sharjah (which established the first breastfeeding clinic in the UAE in 2001).



أصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية  
Breastfeeding Friends

المجلس الأعلى لشؤون الأسرة (Sharjah) / Supreme Council for Family Affairs

## Our Vision

To improve the physical and psychological well-being of babies and mothers by increasing breastfeeding rates - the optimal way to initiate healthy family relationships and thus a secure community.

## Our Mission

To empower mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies according to the international\* and national\*\* infant feeding recommendations [based on scientific evidence]: WHO recommends mothers worldwide to “exclusively\* breastfeed infants for the child’s first six months, to achieve optimal growth, development, and health. Thereafter, they should be given nutritionally adequate and safe complementary foods while breastfeeding continues for up to two years of age or beyond.”

Allah Almighty says:

{Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period].}

Surah Al Baqarah 2:233 (Chapter 2, verse 233).

**\*WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding Recommendations 2017.**

**\*\*Policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding, Ministry of Health, UAE, 2000.**

To carry out the mission, the Society welcomes new volunteers and those willing to donate, in order to empower the largest number of mothers and children to enjoy this gift from Allaah.

\* "Exclusive breastfeeding" is defined as follows: Babies consume no other food or drink except breast milk (includes milk expressed or from a wet nurse) for 6 months of life, not even water, but allows the infant to receive ORS, drops and syrups (vitamins, minerals and medicines).

## Our Goals

- To prepare a number of Breastfeeding Counselors and volunteers who are trained to support, encourage, and protect breastfeeding in the community with special attention to (or emphasis on) the support group Mother-to-Mother.
- To establish breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital, as these groups have been recommended by The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (launched by WHO and UNICEF in 1991).
- To raise awareness on the uniqueness of mother’s milk, the hazards of NOT breastfeeding, and other related topics.
- To reach all mothers in the Emirate of Sharjah, as well as in the rest of the UAE, whether in public places or in homes or institutions, to make them aware of the importance of breastfeeding, support them, and encourage them.

## SERVICES OF BREASTFEEDING FRIENDS SOCIETY



### Support Lines

• **The Support Line** operates seven days a week from 8 am – 10pm in the following languages: Arabic, English & Urdu. Breastfeeding Counselors respond to inquiries, and provide up-to-date non-medical breastfeeding information and support with confidentiality and in a friendly manner.

Call the following number **600570001**

• **Special Cases Support Line:** For questions and enquiries about twins, premature/preterm babies, cleft lip &/or cleft palate, & other special needs babies please contact **050 5191086**

### Breast Pump Services (Sale & Rental)

• This service is available in the Society office at the Supreme Council of Family Affairs, Sharjah.

Phone No.: **06 5065532** or **050 808 5752**

- It provides the sale and rental of high-quality breastfeeding equipment.
- It is available for all, especially for special cases and those attending breastfeeding clinics in Sharjah and other Emirates.



BFF Copyright

## Activities and Events

BFF organizes many activities and events throughout the year, to increase awareness of the importance of breastfeeding and support breastfeeding mothers such as:

- Conducting lectures, awareness stands and workshops in nurseries, schools and universities for employees and female students before marriage.
- Conducting lectures at government institutions and non-governmental organizations to raise awareness of the importance of a working mother and the possibility of continuing to breastfeed.
- Establishing awareness stands in health centers, hospitals and pregnancy clinics in the Emirate of Sharjah.
- Visiting mothers of newborn babies in hospitals and offering them support & gifts.
- Participating in medical conferences and other exhibitions.

- Establishing home visits to some mothers on demand and provide support and assistance for them.
- Conducting workshops and lectures for the volunteers of the Society (on-going education).
- Conducting a training program for 'Breastfeeding Counselors' and inviting women to attend this program, which includes theoretical and practical training.
- Participating in the International & UAE National Breastfeeding Week celebrations in the months of August & November each year, and offering activities for mothers and children in various places in the Emirate of Sharjah, including public places to reach the largest possible number of mothers.
- Celebrating Mother's Day honoring mothers who breastfed their baby for 2 years.



- Conducting competitions and distributing awards and breastfeeding brochures during events.
- Cooperating with the Department of Health Promotion and other voluntary societies of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs to raise awareness of health education which serves all segments of society.

## Monthly Mother-to-Mother Meetings



All women interested in breastfeeding are welcome to attend these meetings, which are led by a Breastfeeding Counselor in a friendly atmosphere and with respect for others. During these meetings, experiences and information about breastfeeding and motherhood can be shared.

**For more information about meetings, please contact BFF office.**

## Breastfeeding Friends Society Library

You can refer to many books and magazines available in the Society Library, which contains a lot of references in the field of breastfeeding, motherhood, child health, nutrition, and other related topics.



### BFF Society endorses the following international organizations and adopts their strategies:



**WHO & UNICEF** jointly developed the Global Strategy for 'Infant and Young Child Feeding' (IYCF), whose aim is to improve through optimal feeding – the nutritional status, growth and development, health and thus survival of infants and young children.



**WABA (World Alliance of Breastfeeding Action)** is a global network of individuals & organisations concerned with the protection, promotion & support of breastfeeding worldwide. WABA action is based on the Innocenti Declaration, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the Global Strategy for Infant & Young Child Feeding. WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF & an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).



**IBFAN (International Baby Food Action Network)** consists of more than 200 public interest groups working around the world to promote the health and well-being of infants, young children and their mothers through the protection, promotion and support of optimal infant and young child feeding practices. IBFAN works to eliminate the irresponsible marketing of breast milk substitutes and feeding bottles through implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes. BFF Society members monitor violations to the marketing code in the local markets, and send reports to IBFAN to take the necessary measures.



**جمعية أصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية**  
**Breastfeeding Friends**

Supporting Your Natural Choice

## Chapter 2:

# BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

Islamic Sharia and WHO/UNICEF recommend breastfeeding; breast milk is the only food your healthy full-term baby needs for the first 6 months (without water or herbal teas). It provides all the nutrients a baby needs.

At the end of the sixth month, it is recommended to introduce appropriate home-made family food, and to continue breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or longer.



اصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية  
Breastfeeding Friends

المجلس الإسلامي الأوربي للأهلوية الإسلامية / European Council For Healthy Muslims

*In this booklet we call the baby "he". We feel this is simpler than writing "he or she" every time.*



efty

**Breastfeeding is the baby's first introduction to a mother's love. With a little time, patience, perseverance, and support from family and society, mothers can successfully breastfeed.**

**Breastfeeding:**

- is a source of bonding and security.
- is the perfect food to help your baby's body and mind grow, by giving all the necessary nutrients.\*
- provides milk which is free, safe, readily available and always at the right temperature.
- ensures protection from a number of infections and other illnesses.
- is environmentally friendly.

\* Breastfed babies may need additional Vitamin D which can be obtained from regular safe sun exposure, or your paediatrician may prescribe a Vitamin D supplement.

**Just-born babies have the desire and natural ability to seek  
their mother's breast and suckle.**

## WHEN DO YOU BREASTFEED YOUR BABY?

**At Birth...** Ask to hold your baby against your skin straight after birth (within the first hour). This will calm your baby, steady his breathing, and keep him warm. He will be more likely to latch onto the breast and breastfeed well.

This is a great time to start your first breastfeed because your baby will be alert and will want to feed. You can ask your midwife or doctor to help with this.

Staying together will also allow good bacteria to transfer from your skin to your baby's. This prevents undesirable bacteria from affecting him.



### **After a Caesarean-Section or Difficult Labour...**

As soon as you are awake and able to hold your baby, ask for him to be brought to you for skin-to-skin contact, and for his first feed.

If you have trouble feeding him, ask for help. Also, if not possible to breastfeed, (for instance, your baby is in the Intensive Care Unit (NICU)), express your breast milk as soon as possible (within six hours after childbirth).



**After leaving the hospital, limit your intake of pain killers (except paracetamol) as some of them can reduce your milk supply.**

## The First 24 Hours After Birth...

Babies are born with extra fat and fluids to help them through the first few days. Newborn babies usually spend most of their first day sleeping which may limit breastfeeding. This is normal.

However if your baby sleeps more than 6 hours, try to wake him by:

- **undressing him to his diaper.**
- **holding him skin-to-skin.**
- **offering your breast frequently.**

Your baby will be happier if you keep him near you and feed him whenever he wants. This will remind your body to produce plenty of milk.

Your baby's stomach is initially very small (like a cherry) and only needs a small amount of breast milk frequently.

Some newborn babies may feed up to 15 times a day.

Breastfeed your baby as long as he wants. Do not limit the length of time your baby feeds. In the first few days a feeding may last up to an hour.

**After the first day...** Your baby will start to wake up more often on the second day. Breastfeed your baby whenever he needs; at least 8 to 12 times in 24 hours.

### Baby's Stomach Capacity



Growth spurts most often occur at two or three weeks of age, then again at six weeks, and thereafter at three and six months of age. A growth spurt may last several days. He may need to feed more often during a growth spurt, so at that time it is even more important to feed on demand.

**The more you breastfeed, the more milk you will make.**

## HOW DO YOU BREASTFEED YOUR BABY?

### Step 1 : Good Positioning

#### 1. Mother's Position: Be Comfortable

When you are sitting or lying down, you should be comfortable with your back well supported.

You can use pillows to support yourself and your baby.

You may also use a footstool.

Remove any clothes or blankets that come between you and your baby.



You can breastfeed while lying down on your side which allows you to get more rest. You can use this position for night feeds or after a caesarean birth (see p.17).



#### 2. Baby's Position :

Turn your baby's body towards you at breast level.

Make sure his head, neck, and body are in a straight line. Only then your baby can swallow easily.

Bring your baby, especially his legs, as close as possible to your body.

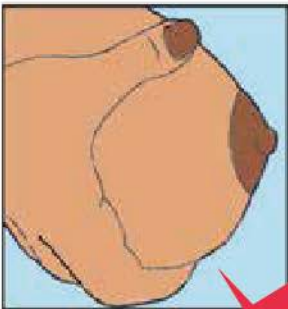
(This is also very important for the lying-down position.)

Keep baby's body close during the whole feed.

### 3. Supporting Your Breast

(The cross-cradle position is one of the best ways to feed newborn babies.)

- When feeding your baby from your right breast, hold your breast with your right hand.
- Your fingers are underneath while the thumb is above the areola. (C-shape).
- Make sure your fingers and thumb are far from the areola.
- Hold your baby behind his shoulders with the palm of your other hand, supporting the base of his head with your thumb and index finger. This will allow him to move his head freely.



Be careful not to press your breast too hard with your thumb blocking the milk flow. You may be able to remove your hand that is supporting the breast once your baby is feeding well.

## Different Positions for Breastfeeding



Copyrights LLLI

**Laid back Position**

LLLI Copyrights

**Cross Cradle Position****Cradle Position**

LLLI Copyrights



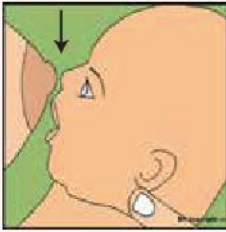
LLLI Copyrights

**Under arm hold****Side lying position**

WHO Copyrights

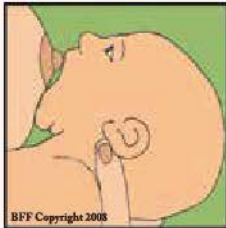
**When baby falls asleep, it is safer for him to lie on his back, turning the head to one side.**

## Step 2: Correct Latching (how to bring baby to your breast)



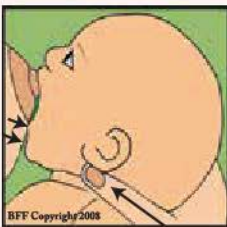
### 1.Start...

- by bringing your baby's nose (not his mouth) opposite your nipple, and allow his head to tilt back slightly.



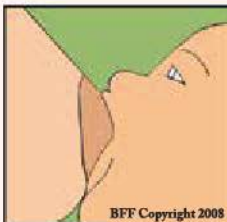
### 2.Wait...

- until he opens his mouth wide, making sure that his tongue is down.
- You can encourage your baby to open his mouth by touching his lips with your nipple.



### 3.Latching...

- Quickly bring your baby towards your breast so that his chin touches the breast first.
- Make sure that his lower lip is as far as possible from your nipple as this makes him take a large amount of the areola (dark area) under the nipple.



### 4.During the Feed...

- you can see the baby's mouth is full.
- you will hear a soft sound when the baby swallows milk.
- you will not feel pain and your breast will be softer.
- your child will be relaxed and satisfied.

Make sure your baby's chin is touching the breast, as this will help him to breastfeed effectively and breathe easily.

Do not hesitate to ask for help when you are in the hospital. Your nurse or breastfeeding specialist will help you to make sure that your baby is latching deeply.

**With deep latching, breastfeeding is painless. If you do feel pain, break the suction by placing your little finger inside the corner of baby's mouth, then start again, or ask for help.**

## What Will Your Milk Be Like?

Colostrum is usually yellow in colour, and is the first milk produced by the mother's breast.

Although it comes in small quantities, it contains highly nutritious and rich substances to protect your baby from infections, and meets all your baby's needs for the first few days of life and after.

Colostrum gradually changes to mature breast milk over the next 2 weeks.

Mature milk may look thin at the beginning of a feed which satisfies your baby's thirst. As he continues to feed, the milk may appear rich and creamy to satisfy his hunger.



Colostrum



Mature milk

**Colostrum is the first immunisation for your baby.**

## How Long Will Your Baby Stay At The Breast?

Babies love to breastfeed, and when they have had enough, they usually come off your breast by themselves (generally within **10 to 30** minutes (if baby was latched properly)).

When your baby finishes the first breast and comes off, sit him up to burp.

Then offer the second side if he wants more.



**It doesn't matter how big or small are your breasts, you can still breastfeed successfully.**

## Signs That Your Baby Is Feeding Well.

- Your baby has a large mouthful of breast.
- Your baby's chin is touching your breast.
- It doesn't hurt you to feed.
- You should see more of the upper part of the areola than the lower part.
- Your baby's cheeks stay rounded during nursing.
- Your baby suckles quickly at first and then rhythmically takes long deep sucks and swallows. It is normal for him to pause sometimes.
- When your baby comes off the breast, the nipple should be rounded, not pinched.
- Your baby finishes the feed and comes off the breast on his own.



**If the baby is properly attached to your breast,  
you will have a good supply of milk and your baby will get a good feeding.  
It will also help to prevent sore nipples.**

## How Do You Know That Your Baby Is Getting Enough Milk?

- You hear, see and feel your baby suckling and swallowing.
- Your baby will appear content and satisfied after most feeds.
- Your nipples should not be sore and your breasts should feel softer and less full after each feeding.
- Your baby has **8** to **12** feeds in 24 hours (including several night feeds).
- He should have at least **6** wet full diapers a day and pass at least **3** yellow watery stools every day (for the first 3 to 4 weeks; see page 21).
- He should be alert and healthy, and growing steadily.



**Mothers and babies, everywhere, need to learn how to breastfeed.**

## WHAT WILL MY BABY'S OUTPUT BE LIKE?



Day one and two  
Black, thick & tarry



Days three and four  
Greenish yellow



Day 5 and after  
Mustard yellow,  
seedy & watery

## NUMBER OF WET DIAPERS PER DAY

Day one

#  
of FULL  
Diapers



Day two



Day three



Day four



Day five



Day six



Day seven



The above image applies to healthy infants who are exclusively breastfed.

## HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF YOUR BABY IS HUNGRY?

You will learn to recognise the signs that your baby is hungry and ready to feed by keeping him beside you day and night.

These signs may include:

- bringing his hands closer to his face
- trying to lick or suck at whatever is close to his face
- turning his head from side to side
- waking up
- saying a "neh" sound when feeling hungry\*

Don't wait until he cries; by then, he will be too upset to feed properly.

Many babies are fussy early evening from colic. They may not necessarily be hungry but need extra comfort.



**Crying is the last sign of hunger.**

### Try not to give your baby a dummy because...

- the number of times your baby feeds may lessen, and your milk supply might be affected.
- dummies (pacifiers) can encourage the development of thrush (fungal infection).
- babies who have a dummy sometimes get nipple confusion.



\* To learn more about infant language please visit : [dunstanbaby.com](http://dunstanbaby.com)

## Chapter 3:

# EXPRESSING MILK AND RETURNING TO WORK

### PART 1: EXPRESSING AND STORING MILK

Expressing milk means removing milk from your breast by hand or machine. It is helpful to know how to express milk to practise when needed.

### PART 2: RETURNING TO WORK

With coordination and advance planning, the nursing mother can ease the transition back to work and continue breastfeeding.



أصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية  
Breastfeeding Friends

المجلس الأعلى للأمومة والطفولة - المجلس الأعلى للمرأة

## PART 1: EXPRESSING AND STORING MILK

### Benefits of expressing milk:

- If your breasts are engorged, express enough to feel comfortable.
- If you need to increase your milk supply (e.g. to empty your breast after breastfeeding)
- If your baby isn't sucking properly (by giving him additional milk).
- To offer breast milk for the baby and maintain the milk supply when the mother is unavailable, or ill, or at work, or any other reason
- To feed a premature baby (sterilized milk containers are recommended), or low birth weight or sick baby, or slow weight gain baby (express your milk more frequently than usual).

### Important information about expressing milk:

- It is important to wash your hands before expressing.
- Express your milk into a container that has been washed in hot, soapy clean water and rinsed well.
- Store milk in small containers (1-4 ounce/30-120ml portions) to avoid waste and for easier thawing & warming,
- You can express milk by hand, or with a hand pump, or an electric pump. (These machines are available at Breastfeeding Friends)
- Don't fill the container to the top as the milk will expand with freezing.



- When you have finished expressing, cover the container, label it, and store it in a cool place.
- Be sure to store the containers at the back of the fridge or freezer and not on the door to avoid exposure to room temperature.
- You can combine newly expressed milk to previously expressed milk in the same day if kept in the fridge, but you must cool it in the fridge for at least one hour before combining.
- To avoid nipple confusion (especially with new-born babies), it is best to avoid baby feeding bottles. You can give expressed milk to your baby using a cup, or spoon.

**Ask for help from Breastfeeding Friends Mother Support, especially if expressing is painful.**

## HOW DO YOU EXPRESS MILK ?

It is helpful to stimulate the let-down reflex (milk flow reflex) before expression.

To stimulate the let-down reflex you can:

- Relax and think about your child or look at his image.
- Warm the breasts with warm compresses, or take a warm bath.
- Massage the entire breast gently with small circular movements.
- Stroke the breast with the palm of the hand and gently press towards the nipple.

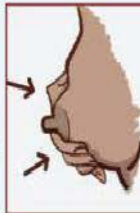
It is important to learn how to express your milk by hand (even if you are using a breast pump).

To express by hand:

- Begin by leaning slightly forward with the nipple aimed at the collection container.
- Position your hand under your breast with your thumb upwards, about 3-4cm back from the nipple.
- Your first finger and thumb should be opposite each other, forming the letter C (half circle) around the breast.
- Press inward towards your ribcage.
- Press the milk ducts firmly between the thumb and fore-finger to squeeze the milk out. Release the pressure, then repeat again and again rhythmically.
- It may take a while before the milk begins to flow.
- When the milk flow slows, rotate the thumb and fore-finger around the areola to compress all the milk ducts.
- Ensure good drainage from all the ducts.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4

**The key to successful milk expression is to trigger the let-down reflex.**

## STORAGE OF EXPRESSED MILK \*

(For a full-term baby)

LOCATION	TEMPERATURE	DURATION
When Cooling		
Warm Room	25-32°C/77-89.6°F	Up to 4 hours
Room temperature	20-24°C/ 68-75°F	Up to 6 hours
	16-19°C/61-66°F	Up to 8 hours
Insulated Cool bag with 3 ice packs	Varies (4-15° C / 39 - 60° F)	Up to 24 hours
Fridge	0-4°C/32-41°F	Up to 3-5 days
+Ice compartment inside the Fridge	Varies	Up to 2 weeks
When Freezing***		
Fridge Freezer	-18°C/0°F	Up to 3 months
Seperate Freezer	-20°C/-4°F	6-12 months
Thawing Milk (previously frozen)		
Thawed in Fridge	0-4°C/32-39°F	Up to 24 hours
Thawed in warm water	lukewarm	Use within 1 hour after thawing

\* References

<http://kellymom.com>

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au>

<http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding>

<http://www.nhs.uk>



## HOW DO YOU THAW AND WARM STORED BREAST MILK?

- Make sure to check the date on the milk's container before use. Use the oldest one first.
- Defrost milk slowly in the refrigerator (takes approximately 12 hours), or to defrost quickly, place it under lukewarm running water.
- Warm the milk under warm, running water or put it in a container of warm water taking care to not touch the lid.
- Mother's milk separates during storage and the cream rises to the surface. Gently swirl, or rotate, the bottle of milk to mix before heating
- Your milk separates during storage and the cream rises to the top. Gently swirl, or rotate, the collection bottle of milk to mix the layers together. Avoid vigorous shaking.
- Never microwave breast milk; it causes uneven heating, or 'hot spots,' which may scald your baby. Overheating destroys the milk's nutritional value.
- Always test the temperature of the milk on the inside of your wrist before feeding it to a baby. The milk should feel warm, not hot.
- Do not reheat it once milk has been warmed. If not used, it should be disposed of after 1 hour.



**Never Refreeze Breast Milk..**

## RISKS IF A BABY IS NOT BREASTFED. BABIES NOT BREASTFED ARE MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING DISEASES:

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Gastro-intestinal infections  
(Diarrhoea..)

Poor Jaw Development

Urine infections

Childhood cancer  
(Leukaemia)

Asthma

Eczema

Obesity

Chest infections

Diabetes

Ear infections

Smelly stools

Lower IQ

Other symptoms like colic, gas, constipation



**JUST ONE Artificial feed CAN DO A LOT OF HARM!**  
**It can cause allergies and will affect the good  
bacteria level in the gut.**

## MOTHERS WHO CHOOSE NOT TO BREASTFEED ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE:

- Excessive bleeding : Breastfeeding contracts the uterus which reduces bleeding and helps the return to its normal pre-pregnancy size.
- Obesity : Mothers who breastfeed return to normal weight faster than mothers who do not breastfeed by using fat stored during pregnancy to produce milk. Breastfeeding consumes about up to 700 calories a day.
- Breast cancer
- Ovarian cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Diabetes



**The benefits of breastfeeding begin right away and also increase as you breastfeed longer!**

## PART 2: RETURNING TO WORK

### What are the benefits of continuing to breastfeed after returning to work?

- To not lose the health benefits of breastfeeding for you and your baby.
- To protect your baby from illnesses.
- To strengthen the bond between you and your baby.
- To maintain your milk supply.

### Tips for Returning to Work

- It is often difficult to maintain your milk supply when you go back to work unless you have planned ahead.
- Start to express and store your milk in the freezer before returning to work, so that you have an adequate supply of milk.
- Feed your baby directly before going out to work and immediately on returning home.
- It is important to feed at night as the hormone Prolactin, which your body produces in larger quantities at night, helps to produce milk.
- Remove milk every 3 hours from your breast while at work by breastfeeding or expressing the milk because keeping the milk inside will reduce your milk supply.
- It is preferable to arrange childcare for your baby near your work-place, so that you can breastfeed during breaks and immediately before and after work.
- Expressing may be difficult at first, but it will become easier very quickly



**Minimise sadness about leaving your baby when returning to work by returning near the end of the week, and then having your days off shortly after your return.**

## Planning Ahead

- Coordinate with the management of your organisation before going on maternity leave, to support you in breastfeeding after returning to work.
- Tell your management that you want to take the breastfeeding hours available to you as stipulated in the Human Resources Laws.
- Ask for an adequate rest period to express milk at your workplace (approximately half an hour).
- Be flexible, persistent, and positive. Consider all options and know all your rights.

## What should be available in the breastfeeding room at your workplace?

- You will need to have a suitable space which is cool, clean, and private, with a comfortable chair.
- It is preferable to use an electric pump to save time and effort, and you will need a power point nearby.
- You will need a hand basin so that you can wash the pump parts after use.

## To express milk in the breastfeeding room, you will need:

- Sterilised bottles.
- A cooling bag with ice blocks (if a refrigerator is not available in the workplace).
- A breast pump (if it is not already available in the breastfeeding room).
- An extra bra and breast pads as additional backup.



**Don't think the amount of milk is small when you begin expressing; it will increase gradually and be enough to feed your baby.**

## How would the management of your institution benefit by supporting breastfeeding working mothers?

- Encouraging mothers to return to work reduces the need to hire and train new employees.
- Breastfed children enjoy better health conditions, resulting in a decrease in the number of doctor visits, as well as a reduction in the hours of absent mothers from work to take care of their sick children.
- Mothers who continue to breastfeed have a reduced risk of some serious diseases such as breast and uterine cancer.
- Support for breastfeeding mothers will increase their commitment and loyalty to work and encourage others to join the organisation.



## UAE BREASTFEEDING LAWS

### Do I have a legal right to maintain breastfeeding at work?

Your administration is obliged to enable you to maintain breastfeeding while working.

#### Sharjah Human Resources Law: (2014)

1. The female employee shall be given a maternity leave of **90** days from the date of childbirth, the same to be evidenced by a medical certificate or by a birth certificate.
2. The female employee may get a leave of (two weeks) before the expected date of childbirth, authorised by the specialist medical report and to be deducted from the maternity leave.
3. If the period referred to in article (2) exceeds two weeks, the excess period is to be deducted from her annual leave, otherwise it may be calculated as or considered as unpaid leave and added to (the hundred days) stipulated in the fifth article.
4. If the female employee's requests for sick leave are approved by the medical authority before the date of childbirth, they shall be considered as sick leave and may not be considered as maternity leave. However, if they are within the excess period, they should be considered as mentioned above.
5. It is permissible for an employee to combine maternity leave, annual leave, and unpaid leave to a maximum of (one hundred days) from the beginning of maternity leave, provided that leave be continuous.
6. The female employee is granted after finishing her maternity leave ( for one year), two hours nursing break for the first six months, and one hour for the second six months.
7. The employee who has not completed the first six months at the expiry of maternity leave, and at the time of this circular note issuance date may get 2 hours feeding against the remaining period for the above mentioned term.
8. In all cases, it is not permissible to divide the feeding period mentioned in the two articles (6) (7) above; it must be continuous and shall be taken at the beginning or end of the working time
9. The male employee shall be given a paid fatherhood leave for three continual days within one month from the delivery date, provided that he shall submit a proof of baby birth inside the country

**Human Resources Law in Federal Government**  
**Federal Decree Law No. (11) for 2008 on Human Resources in the**  
**Federal Government,**  
**Federal Decree Law amendment No. (9) for 2011, &**  
**Federal Decree Law amendment No. (17) for 2016.**

**Maternity Leave (Article 53)**

1. Full time female employees are entitled to a paid Maternity leave of 3 months.
2. A female employee is entitled after giving birth and for the duration of four months, a nursing leave for two hours daily to feed her infant.
3. Maternity leave may not be combined with unpaid leave.

**Article (54)**

A male employee who has a baby born within the UAE is to be granted a 3 working day paternity leave with full pay, to be taken during the first month of the baby's birth.

## Private Sector Maternity Leave Law (2011)

### Article (30)

A working woman is entitled to 45 days maternity leave with full pay including the period before and after the delivery, provided she has served continuously for not less than one year. The maternity leave is granted with half pay if the woman has not completed one year of service.

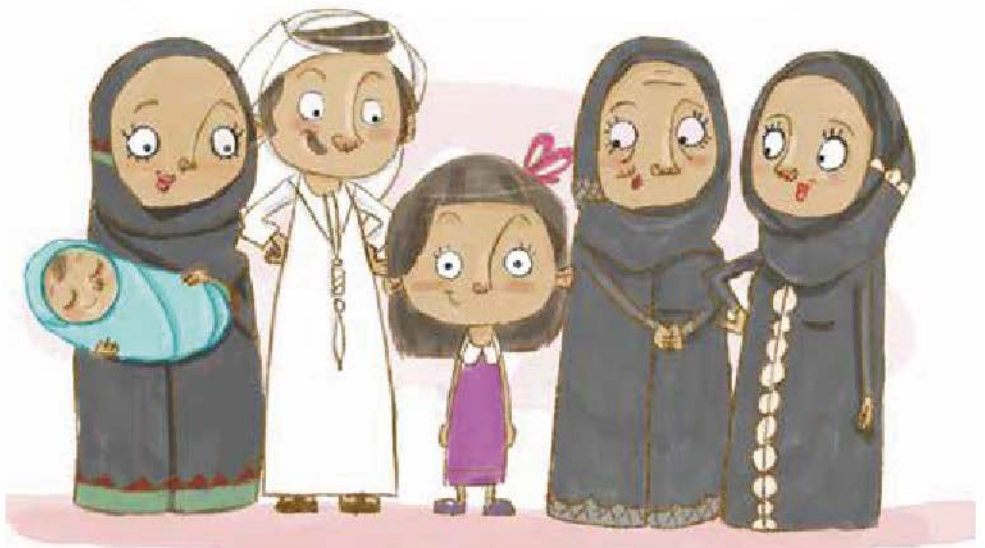
At the end of the maternity leave, a working woman has the right to extend her maternity leave for a maximum period of 100 continuous or interrupted days without pay, if the interruption is caused by illness which prevents her from coming to work. The illness must be confirmed by a medical certificate from a licensed competent health authority, and approved that the illness is a resulting from pregnancy or delivery.

Maternity leave in either of the above cases is not deducted from any other leave that a female employee is entitled to.

### Article (31)

During the 18 months following the date of delivery, an employee who nurses her child has the right to have two daily intervals which do not exceed half an hour each for the purpose of nursing her child. These additional intervals are considered part of her working hours and no deduction in wages can be made.

**N.B. Please refer to local laws in other Emirates**





أصدقاء الرضاعة الطبيعية  
Breastfeeding Friends

المجلس الأعلى لشؤون الأسرة : Supreme Council For Family Affairs



**Breastfeeding Friends Society won first place  
in the Sharjah Award for Voluntary Work,  
the 14th session, in 2016,  
for the category of the best NGO for the  
establishment of voluntary opportunities.**

## SHARJAH BABY FRIENDLY EMIRATE

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, announced that Sharjah is a baby-friendly emirate on December 9, 2015. Sharjah is the first baby-friendly city in the world after adopting four standards for being rated as baby-friendly. This is the first time such a scheme has been implemented in the world.



"The working mother in the Emirate of Sharjah has the opportunity to attend to her child and breastfeed him, because of the important role of breastfeeding, and its impact on the upbringing of the child. Thanks to each mother, she will give us a healthy child, and also each father nurtures and helps; together they make a healthy sound society, aiming to develop the land and not corrupt it. We wish each pregnant mother bears in mind that she is trusted on a precious gift created in her womb, not to be harmed until we provide him with the care he deserves."

**His Excellency Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah.**

### Baby-Friendly Hospitals

Baby-Friendly Hospitals aim to create a supportive environment for mothers to start and continue breastfeeding.

Choosing a baby-friendly hospital is the right start to breastfeeding. \*

Pregnant women are encouraged to ensure that the hospital (in the Emirate of Sharjah) is a baby-friendly hospital and as for the rest of the UAE choose a hospital that encourages and supports breastfeeding at birth.

For more information on baby-friendly hospital profiles, please visit the following link & website:

<http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/bfhi/en/>

<http://www.sbf.ae>

## OTHER BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES TO GET HELP

### • Breastfeeding (Lactation) Clinic:

#### Family Health Promotion Center, Sharjah

To take an Appointment, please call: **06 5090842**

### • BABY FRIENDLY HOSPITALS IN Emirate of Sharjah:

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Al Qassimi Hospital (Sharjah) | 2. .Khorfakkan Hospital (Sharjah) |
| 3. Al Dhaid Hospital (Sharjah)   | 4. Kalba Hospital (Sharjah)       |

• **Sharjah Child Friendly Office:** please call: **065195457**

### • Useful Breastfeeding Websites

[www.facebook.com/pages/Breastfeeding-QA-UAE \(Breastfeeding Mothers Support Group, UAE\)](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Breastfeeding-QA-UAE-(Breastfeeding-Mothers-Support-Group,-UAE))

[www.facebook.com/DrJackNewman](https://www.facebook.com/DrJackNewman)

[www.kellymom.com](https://www.kellymom.com)

[www.lli.org/uae](https://www.lli.org/uae)

[www.waba.org.my](https://www.waba.org.my)

[www.ibfan.org](https://www.ibfan.org)

[www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk](https://www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk)

[www.babyfriendly.org.uk](https://www.babyfriendly.org.uk)

[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

[www.bestbeginnings.org.uk](https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk)

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/learning-to-breastfeed/>

### References

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) UNICEF/WHO

American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP)

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)

International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)

<http://www.fahr.gov.ae>

<http://uaelaborlaw.com>

### • La Leche League

Breastfeeding is the natural and healthy way to feed your baby,  
any other option is inferior.

Interested in sharing your skills with us  
in any of our activities?

Wanting to support our work?

You are welcome to join us at any time  
of the year and become a BFF member!

Your help will be really precious.



الثقة في  
الصحة  
Promotion



## TO CONTACT THE SOCIETY OF BREASTFEEDING FRIENDS: The Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates



**Support Line: 600570001** (8am – 10pm)

Breast pump Services(Sales and Rental) **0508085752**

P.O.Box: 61161

Phone: 06 506 5535

Fax: 06 506 5510

E-mail: [breast.feeding@scfa.shj.ae](mailto:breast.feeding@scfa.shj.ae) Website: [www.bffriends.ae](http://www.bffriends.ae)



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[@Bff\\_sh](https://www.instagram.com/Bff_sh)

#BFF sharjah



Shj BfFriends التطبيق الذكي



[http://telegram.me/breastfeeding\\_friend](http://telegram.me/breastfeeding_friend)

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