



CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Breastfeeding: Rooming in

This document should be read in conjunction with this [Disclaimer](#)

BFHI Step 7: Practice rooming-in; allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.

Key points

1. Babies will remain with their mothers 24 hours per day from birth until discharge. Mother's request or staff suggestion, without a justifiable reason, is not acceptable in the BFHI Global Standards.
2. All separations should be documented, including the time, duration and reason the baby was separated from the mother.
3. Rooming in allows unrestricted skin to skin contact and unrestricted breastfeeding. There is a strong correlation between rooming in and longer breastfeeding duration
4. Midwives should provide guidance to mothers to enable them to recognise their baby's feeding cues and behavioural patterns. Rooming in facilitates this process.

Feeding Cues may include the following:


- Stirring
- Mouthing – opening and closing mouth
- Seeking/Rooting - turning head from side to side
- Rapid eye movements, waking from sleep and becoming restless
- Hand to mouth-sucking fist or fingers
- **Crying is a late hunger cue.**

References

1. BFHI Australia. BFHI Handbook for Maternity Facilities 2016
2. WNHS. BFHI Breastfeeding Policy. 2018
3. Phillips, R. The Sacred Hour: Uninterrupted Skin to Skin Contact Immediately After Birth. *Newborn & Infant Nursing Reviews* 13 (2013) 67-72.
4. Lauwers, J., Swisher, A. *Counselling the Nursing Mother A Lactation Consultant's Guide* Sixth edition. 2016.

Related WNHS policies, procedures and guidelines

WNHS. BFHI Breastfeeding Policy. 2018
 KEMH Clinical Guidelines: Breastfeeding

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