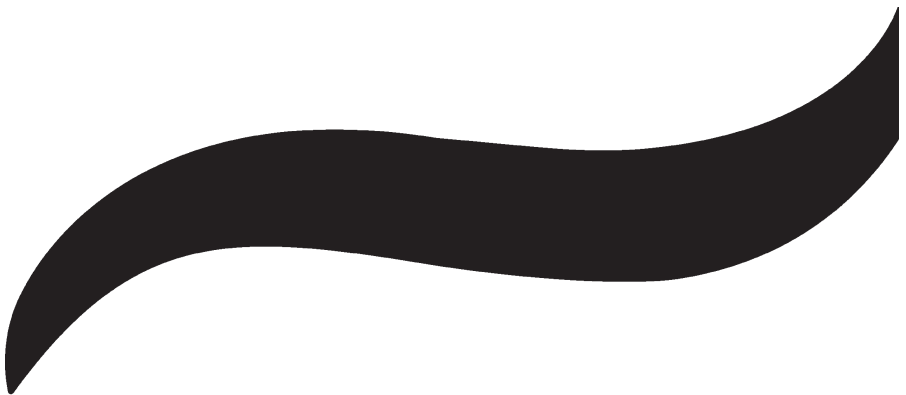




Breastfeeding while undergoing surgery

Information for patients
Anaesthetics



Being admitted to hospital can be stressful. When you also have a child you are breastfeeding, this can be very stressful. We want to support you with breastfeeding while you are in hospital.

CAN I KEEP MY BABY WITH ME WHEN I COME INTO HOSPITAL?

Yes. We can support you with breastfeeding if this is how you have chosen to feed your baby. If you are well enough, we will advise that your baby stays with you in hospital so you can continue to feed them.

If you don't wish your baby to stay with you, or you are too unwell, we will support you to express your milk to keep your milk supply. This will allow you to continue breastfeeding when you are discharged from hospital. It is important you do not stop breastfeeding suddenly where possible as this may lead to mastitis.

CAN I USE A BREAST PUMP?

We can provide a hospital grade double breast pump when you are admitted to hospital and a cold water sterilising kit. Sometimes this kit may be on another hospital site but we can arrange for it to be moved.

You can also use your own equipment if you wish. However, any electrical equipment should be PAT tested by maintenance staff to comply with safety standards. If you require this, please ask the nursing staff to arrange this for you.

WHAT DO I DO WITH EXPRESSED BREAST MILK?

Ideally you should make arrangements to transport expressed milk home as soon as possible.

Expressed breastmilk should be stored and transported in a cool bag with ice packs. We can give you ice on the wards if you don't have any ice packs.

In special circumstances, in University Hospital Wishaw, expressed milk may temporarily be stored in the designated fridge in Ward 23. Expressed milk must be clearly labelled with your name and CHI number. It must also have the date and time it was expressed and the ward that you are on.

Breastmilk can be stored for 6 hours at room temperature and up to 5 days in a fridge or cool bag at 0-4°C

WHAT ABOUT ON THE DAY OF SURGERY?

If you are having an operation, we advise breastfeeding or expressing immediately before your surgery. This will help to make sure your breasts do not become engorged (too full) during/after your operation.

WHEN CAN I BREAST FEED AFTER THE OPERATION?

You should start breastfeeding/expressing as soon as possible after your surgery.

Normally, after having an anaesthetic, a mother can start breastfeeding again once she is awake, stable and alert. This might depend on the type of pain relief that you need to have. Please discuss this with your anaesthetist.

CAN MY BABY STAY WITH ME OVERNIGHT?

If you are having planned surgery, we will make every effort to keep you baby with you. Unfortunately, our ward staff are unable to help you to care for your baby. You can have a responsible adult stay in your room with your baby to care for them while you are unwell. Your baby and its carer can see you whenever they need to, day or night, so that you can feed when needed.

You can continue to breastfeed with most medications and if not we can usually find a safe alternative.

WILL MY MEDICINES HARM MY BABY?

We will always try to give you medication that is safe for you to carry on breastfeeding. However, where this is not possible, we advise you to express your milk and get rid of it. This will keep your milk supply until you can have more suitable medication.

Contact the Infant Feeding Team or your health visitor for breastfeeding support while in Hospital 01698 361100 page 139

The Breastfeeding Network is a useful resource for both patients and medical staff. They have fact sheets for many drugs on the following link: <https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/drugs-factsheets/>.

If you need further support while you are in hospital, please ask nursing staff to contact the infant feeding team, or contact your own

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