

NZCOM CONSENSUS STATEMENT

Breastfeeding

This Consensus Statement was ratified at NZCOM AGM, July 2002

References updated 2002, 2009

The New Zealand College of Midwives is committed to protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding.

Midwives:

- are the health professionals with a primary role in the initiation and the establishment of breastfeeding
- are committed to the health and well-being of women and acknowledge that breastfeeding has health benefits for women
- are committed to the health and well-being of babies, and believe that human milk is the optimum food for human babies. Breastfeeding also provides immunological benefits that promote healthy growth and development of infants
- have a responsibility to provide evidence-based research and culturally appropriate information about breastfeeding that supports women to develop and maintain the art of successful breastfeeding
- have a responsibility to provide evidence-based research and culturally appropriate information about infant feeding to women during pregnancy and the postpartum
- have a responsibility to protect and support the breastfeeding woman and her baby
- support the World Health Organisation recommendation that babies should be exclusively breastfed until six months of age and with added solids continue breastfeeding into the second year and beyond
- support the principles of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI).

Definitions:

The following definitions should be used when describing breastfeeding:

- ***Exclusive breastfeeding:*** The infant has never, to the mother's knowledge, had any water, formula or other liquid or solid food. Only breastmilk, from the breast or expressed, and prescribed* medicines have been given from birth.
*Prescribed as per the Medicines Act 1981
- ***Fully breastfeeding:*** The infant has taken breastmilk only, no other liquids or solids except a minimal amount of water or prescribed medicines, in the past 48 hours.
- ***Partial breastfeeding:*** The infant has taken some breastmilk and some infant formula or other solid food in the past 48 hours.
- ***Artificial feeding:*** The infant has had no breastmilk but has had alternative liquid such as infant formula with or without food in the past 48 hours.

References:

- Title: Evidence for the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding
Author: World Health Organisation, Geneva. 1998.
- Title: International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes
Author: World Health Organisation
Source: WHO – Geneva, 1991.
- Title: Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women: A background paper
Author: Ministry of Health. New Zealand.2000. Updated 2009.
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- Title: Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Infants and Toddlers (Aged 0-2). A background paper
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<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/0-2-food-and-nutrition-guidelines-may2008>
- Title: Infant Feeding: Guidelines for New Zealand Health Workers
Author: Ministry of Health, New Zealand. 1997.
- Title: A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth
Author: Enkin, M. Keirse, M. Renfrew, M. Neilson, J.
Source: Oxford University Press. 1995.
ISBN 0-19-262326-5, Hardback ISBN 0-19-262324-9, Paperback
- Title: Breastfeeding Pure and Simple
Author: Gwen Gotsch
Source: La Leche League International, Revised edition 2000
- Title: Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative Documents for Aotearoa
Author: New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority (NZBA)
Source: Julie Stufkens, Coordinator NZBA E.mail: Julie.Stufkens@cph.co.nz
- Title: Evidence Based Guidelines for Breastfeeding Management during the First Fourteen Days
Author: International Lactation Consultants Association
- Title: The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding
Author: La Leche League International
Source: Angus and Robertson, 1997. (6th Revised Edition)
- Title: Breastfeeding: A guide to action
Author: Ministry of Health, New Zealand, 2002. www.moh.govt.nz
- Title: National Strategic Plan of Action for Breastfeeding 2008-2012
Author: National Breastfeeding Advisory Committee, New Zealand, 2008.

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The purpose of New Zealand College of Midwives Consensus Statements is to provide women, midwives and the maternity services with the profession's position on any given situation. The guidelines are designed to educate and support best practice.

All position statements are regularly reviewed and updated in line with evidence-based practice.