

Breastfeeding Mothers Bill of Rights

New York State Health Law Bill S1107 (Effective 5/1/09)

Choosing the way you will feed your new baby is one of the most important decisions you will make in preparing for your baby's arrival. Doctors agree that for most women breastfeeding is the safest and most healthy choice. It is your right to be informed about the benefits of breastfeeding and having your healthcare provider encourage and support breastfeeding.

Before You Deliver:

- ☆ You have the right to receive complete information about the benefits of breastfeeding for yourself and your baby. This will help you to make an informed choice on how to feed your baby.
- ☆ The nutritional, medical and psychological benefits of breastfeeding;
- ☆ The steps necessary to prepare yourself for breastfeeding;
- ☆ An explanation of some of the problems you may encounter and how to avoid or solve them.

In The Maternal Healthcare Facility:

- ☆ You have the right to have your baby stay with you right after birth whether you deliver vaginally or by cesarean section.
- ☆ You have the right to begin breastfeeding within one hour after birth.
- ☆ You have the right to have someone with specialized training in breastfeeding give you information and help you whenever you need it.
- ☆ You have the right to insist that your baby not receive any bottle feeding or pacifiers.
- ☆ You have the right to know about and refuse any drugs that may dry up your milk.
- ☆ You have the right to have your baby with you 24 hours a day.
- ☆ You have the right to breastfeed your baby at any time day or night.
- ☆ You have the right to know if your doctor or your baby's pediatrician is advising against breastfeeding before any feeding decisions are made.
- ☆ You have the right to have a sign on your baby's crib clearly stating that your baby is breastfeeding and that no bottle feeding of any type is to be offered.
- ☆ You have the right to receive full information about how you are doing with breastfeeding and get help on how to improve.
- ☆ You have the right to breastfeed your baby in the neonatal intensive care unit. If nursing is not possible, have your baby receive your pumped or expressed milk.
- ☆ If you or your baby are re-hospitalized after the initial delivery stay you have the right to receive support to continue breastfeeding. In

this case the hospital will make every effort to provide hospital grade electric pumps and rooming-in facilities. A staff member with specialized training in breastfeeding will help you.

- ☆ You have the right to have help from someone specially trained in breastfeeding support and expressing breast milk if your baby has special needs.
- ☆ You have the right to have a family member or friend receive breastfeeding information from a specially trained staff member.

When You Leave The Maternal Healthcare Facility:

- ☆ You have the right to printed breastfeeding information free of commercial material
- ☆ You have the right to be discharged from the facility without coupons or free samples intended to discourage breastfeeding, unless specifically requested by you, and available at the facility.
- ☆ You have the right to get information about breastfeeding resources in your community including information on availability of breastfeeding consultants, support groups and breast pumps.
- ☆ You have the right to have the facility give you information to help choose a medical provider for your baby and understand the importance of a follow-up appt.
- ☆ You have the right to receive information about safely collecting and storing your breast milk.
- ☆ You have the right to breastfeed your baby in any location public or private, where you are otherwise authorized to be.

All the above are your rights. If the maternal healthcare facility does not honor these rights you can seek assistance by contacting the New York State Department of Health.

