

a. Questions to Ask before Labour

MODULE 4

One way to prepare for breastfeeding is to ask questions. If possible, question the hospital staff before your due date. Here is a list of questions you can ask the staff at the hospital where your baby will be born. You can print the list and bring it with you to the hospital so you can discuss with the nurses during labour.

When will I be able to breastfeed?
Answer The earlier the better. Remember that your baby is most awake and ready to learn how to suckle during the first two hours after birth. Not all babies are ready and able to do this at that time, but you can still enjoy this first quiet time together.
Will someone help me the first time I breastfeed?
Answer Ask that someone who has experience be there to help try get started.
Does the hospital offer breastfeeding classes?
Answer While you are in the hospital, the nurses can answer your question and help you with breastfeeding. Ask for as much help and information as you need. As well, you may find it helpful to attend breastfeeding classes where you can talk with other mothers about breastfeeding.
Does the hospital staff give breastfed babies water or pacifiers?
Answer Breastfed babies should not be given false nipples or pacifiers. Sucking the nipple of a bottle or a pacifier and sucking the breast are very different. If babies are given a bottle or a pacifier, they may prefer to suck them and not the breast. The baby may refuse your breast. There is no need to give water, sugar and water, or formula to healthy babies who breastfeed. If the doctor says that the baby needs liquids, it can be given to the baby by cup or syringe.
Does the hospital have a support group or 24-hour help line for breastfeeding mothers?
Answer If it does, make sure to call someone as soon as you have questions about breastfeeding. Keep the phone number handy. Many problems seem to occur during the night. It is important to phone the number when you need it.