

E Nurture

A newsletter for breastfeeding mothers
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“Rooming-in”

Having moms and babies stay in the same room throughout their hospital stay is called “rooming-in.” In the past, babies were housed in central nurseries, only coming out to visit their moms every four hours during the day for feedings. This unnatural procedure has been eliminated, and now babies stay with mom so that they can be held, comforted, and fed whenever needed.

Babies have individual personalities right from birth. By spending time together, new mothers learn their baby’s pattern, normal behavior for this child, and little sounds he normally makes. Learning to respond to your baby in the hospital (while the nurse is close-at-hand to help as needed) and learning how to take care of him will build your confidence in your ability to care for your baby after you go home.

Before the baby is born, he is carried constantly for nine months. Whenever he reaches out, there is mom. He feels your body rhythms as you move about, hears your heartbeat, breathing, and voice, and is constantly comforted by your presence. After the baby is born, he is placed in a crib and left alone. He doesn’t know where mom has gone! When you hold your baby, you reconnect and reassure him

with familiar sensations of movement and sound. Don’t be afraid that you will spoil your baby. You will help to make him more independent as he grows by satisfying his need for holding and closeness now. Rooming-in helps you to hold your baby more.

Most babies have their days and nights mixed-up. Many babies sleep longer stretches during the day, and wake more often to feed at night. It helps to wake the baby to breastfeed every two to three hours during the day, then feed on demand at night. In the early days, when both of you are just learning to breastfeed, the best opportunities for practice and success may come during the night. Rooming-in helps you take advantage of the times your baby may be most alert and able to breastfeed well. (And frequent breastfeeding from birth will minimize engorgement, too.)

Studies have shown that new moms average 5.5 hours of sleep at night in the hospital if their babies are in the room with them, and 5.35 hours of sleep if they are alone. That is why daytime naps are so important. Rooming-in does not interfere with a new mom’s rest. The advantages of nighttime contact with the baby are too good to miss!

If you have questions or concerns about breastfeeding,
you can call the lactation consultants at
The Family Birth Place at Park Ridge Hospital.

Breastfeeding Helpline
(585) 368-4033

Family Birth Place at
Park Ridge Hospital

 Unity Health System
www.unityhealth.org