



# Breastfeeding Self-Assessment Tool: Family Practitioner

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate # of women seen annually by provider for prenatal care: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate # of women seen annually by provider for postpartum care (birth to 6 weeks): \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate # of women seen annually by provider for infant care: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of clinic staff responsible for providing prenatal, postpartum, or infant care:

\_\_\_\_\_ Nurses

\_\_\_\_\_ Lactation Consultants

\_\_\_\_\_ Physicians

\_\_\_\_\_ Midwives

\_\_\_\_\_ Physician Assistants

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** The purpose of this self-assessment is to provide a tool for medical clinic staff to compare their breastfeeding support practices to a framework of established practices that have been shown to provide optimal support for breastfeeding families. The questions included in this self-assessment are primarily based on the American Academy of Pediatrics' *Ten Steps to Support Parents' Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby* and have been modified to reflect the unique roles of family practice, pediatric, and OB/GYN providers. This tool will enable providers to identify areas of strength, challenges, and unintentional barriers to breastfeeding support in their clinic. Your responses for each step should reflect current individual and clinic practices.

***For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points***

Missoula City-County Health Department  
Nutrition Services  
301 W. Alder  
Missoula, MT 59802-4123  
(406) 258-4740

*good*  
**It's Public Health.**

**Step 1: Make a commitment to the importance of breastfeeding.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
I am aware of the health benefits associated with breastfeeding, particularly exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of an infant's life.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
As a standard practice, I endorse breastfeeding as an important preventive health care approach.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I acknowledge that professional education and skills that encourage, protect, and sustain breastfeeding are an integral aspect of primary health care.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I have a copy of the Healthy People 2020 national breastfeeding goals and have taken specific steps toward achieving these goals.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic collects data on breastfeeding initiation and duration among patients in the practice.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

**Step 2: Train all staff in skills necessary to support breastfeeding.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
I am capable of evaluating breastfeeding through culturally relevant patient history and physical assessment.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I have developed knowledge and skills in the management of common breastfeeding problems.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I know the most up-to-date advice on medications and possible medical contraindications to breastfeeding.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic has at least one breastfeeding resource person on staff and has facilitated this person's acquisition of advanced breastfeeding management skills by enabling attendance at educational programs and trainings.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic makes information on community resources and office referral guidelines around breastfeeding support available and easily accessible to staff.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

***For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points***

### Step 3: Inform women and families about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.

	Response (circle one)			Points
I encourage expectant parents to attend breastfeeding classes before deciding about infant feeding, and I make appropriate referrals to local breastfeeding classes.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
At prenatal visits for expectant parents, I discuss infant feeding practices and the advantages of breastfeeding.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide patients with information about hospitals that promote breastfeeding-friendly practices such as skin-to-skin, rooming-in, no pacifiers, and no formula marketing.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide current and culturally relevant breastfeeding educational resources to expectant parents.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I am able to identify patients with potential lactation risk factors (e.g., flat or inverted nipples, previous breast surgery, or no change in breast size during pregnancy) and recommend appropriate interventions or referrals.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
<b>Total Points:</b>				<b>/10</b>

### Step 4: Assess infants during early follow-up visits.

	Response (circle one)			Points
My clinic schedules follow-up visits for newborns within two days of hospital discharge.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
At these visits, a trained professional observes the mother breastfeeding her baby and evaluates for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Successful breastfeeding</li> <li>◆ Adequacy, including overabundance, of milk supply</li> <li>◆ Newborn's state of hydration</li> <li>◆ Jaundice</li> </ul>	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I educate parents about the normal stool and urine patterns of a breastfed newborn.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
Per AAP recommendations for breastfed infants, I discourage the use of artificial nipples and pacifiers until breastfeeding is well-established at 1 month of age.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
If supplementation is medically necessary, I recommend feeding methods that will interfere least with the establishment of successful breastfeeding.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
<b>Total Points:</b>				<b>/10</b>

***For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points***

### Step 5: Encourage mothers to breastfeed on demand.

	Response (circle one)			Points
At each visit with a mother and infant, I gather historical information about feeding activity since birth.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I help breastfeeding mothers identify infant feeding cues.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I explain the importance of frequent feedings (including night feedings) to help breastfeeding mothers establish and maintain an adequate milk supply.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I recognize and adapt my practice to reflect diverse cultural beliefs, practices, and values regarding lactation, colostrum consumption, let-down techniques, and maternal food preferences.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
Clinic practices do not interrupt or discourage feeding when an infant is in the office.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

### Step 6: Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation when they will be away from their babies.

	Response (circle one)			Points
I have developed skill in explaining optimal breastfeeding practices and demonstrating correct breastfeeding technique to mothers and families.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I use sample breastfeeding aids (infant slings, nursing footstools, nursing pillows, breast shells, breast pumps) when instructing new mothers.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide instruction about expression and storage of breast milk for mothers when they will be separated from their babies.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I distribute patient information sheets about expressing and storing breast milk, as well as alternative methods of offering expressed breast milk.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I make appropriate modifications to meet the literacy and language needs of breastfeeding mothers.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

<b><i>For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points</i></b>
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**Step 7: Use appropriate anticipatory guidance that supports exclusive breastfeeding until infants are six months old, and encourage the continuation of breastfeeding as long as mutually desired by the mother and baby.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
I provide anticipatory guidance and age-appropriate breastfeeding intervention as part of every routine, maternal, and infant health screening visit.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I evaluate the adequacy of the mother's milk supply during all postpartum visits and am aware of interventions for stimulating the supply of breast milk.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I am aware of normal variation in the growth patterns of breastfed infants, and I explain to parents the need to increase breastfeeding frequency during growth spurts.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I counsel families about normal sleep behaviors of a breastfed baby, as well as alternative soothing activities for fussy infants to avoid early use of pacifiers.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I counsel families about the importance of delaying the introduction of solid foods until the infant is around 6 months of age and shows signs of readiness.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

**Step 8: Support breastfeeding by providing accurate information about maternal wellness.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
I am skilled in evaluating the wellbeing of breastfeeding mothers, including postpartum depression, and am able to provide or refer for appropriate care as needed.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide or refer for basic nutritional counseling for breastfeeding mothers, including screening for maternal nutritional deficiencies or other problems.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide mothers with current information about the continuation of breastfeeding during maternal illness and when planning to undergo medical procedures.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I counsel mothers about ways to overcome negative social pressures related to breastfeeding.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I commend breastfeeding mothers at every office visit for continuing to nurse their babies.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

***For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points***

**Step 9: Communicate support for breastfeeding in the office environment.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
Visual images at my clinic—including posters, pamphlets, and related materials—support breastfeeding and reflect the diversity of the patient population being served.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I provide women and families with noncommercial educational materials on breastfeeding, as appropriate.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic has removed commercial logos and other indirect formula endorsements (notepads and pens with brand names, calendars, and decorative logos) and stores formula supplies out of view.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic has signs in the waiting room encouraging breastfeeding mothers to nurse their babies wherever they are comfortable and whenever they desire.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
My clinic provides a welcoming, comfortable, and private place for mothers to breastfeed.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

**Step 10: Expand the network of support for breastfeeding.**

	Response (circle one)			Points
My clinic works with local hospitals to implement effective breastfeeding support practices and policies.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I refer expectant and new parents to WIC counselors and local breastfeeding support groups as needed.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I have identified local breastfeeding specialists and am knowledgeable about their background and expertise so that I can provide informed referrals for mothers in need of extra breastfeeding assistance and support.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I have developed and continue to nurture reciprocal working relationships with local lactation specialists.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	
I am knowledgeable about community organizations and local breastfeeding support resources and make referrals to patients as appropriate.	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	

**Total Points: /10**

***For all responses, Yes = 2 points, In Process = 1 point, No = 0 points***

## Summary of Points by Focus Area:

Step 1: Make a commitment to the importance of breastfeeding.	/10
Step 2: Train all staff in skills necessary to support breastfeeding.	/10
Step 3: Inform women and families about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.	/10
Step 4: Assess infants during early follow-up visits.	/10
Step 5: Encourage mothers to breastfeed on demand.	/10
Step 6: Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation when they will be away from their babies.	/10
Step 7: Use appropriate anticipatory guidance that supports exclusive breastfeeding until infants are six months old, and encourage the continuation of breastfeeding as long as mutually desired by the mother and baby.	/10
Step 8: Support breastfeeding by providing accurate information about maternal wellness.	/10
Step 9: Communicate support for breastfeeding in the office environment.	/10
Step 10: Expand the network of support for breastfeeding.	/10
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>

Your point total provides a general indicator of current individual and clinic practices and policies that support breastfeeding families. Our hope is that, by completing this self-assessment, you have identified areas of strength within your practice, as well as opportunities for continued development and growth. ***A score of 90 or above is considered an exemplary level of support for breastfeeding families.***

Upon completion of this self-assessment, the Missoula City-County Health Department will offer a follow-up consultation to help you develop a work plan based on your current practices and individual and clinic goals, at no cost to your clinic. By implementing this work plan and completing the self-assessment annually, you will be able to evaluate progress toward your goals for breastfeeding support.

Any information from your self-assessment will be de-identified if it is compiled and shared for the purpose of program evaluation.

***For further information, or to schedule a follow-up consultation, please contact:***

Mary Pittaway, Nutrition Services Manager  
Missoula City-County Health Department  
(406) 258-4837  
mpittaway@co.missoula.mt.us

Alison Doernberg, Graduate Student Intern  
Missoula City-County Health Department  
406-258-3827  
adoernberg@co.missoula.mt.us