

Things To Remember When Visiting Buscot Ward

Because of the lack of space on Buscot ward, only two visitors per baby are allowed in the room at any one time. One of these visitors has to be a parent.

For security reasons, unsupervised visits are not possible. Please do not try to visit the ward without a parent - security has to remain tight and staff are not allowed to admit visitors who are not supervised by a parent.

Respect the wishes of parents, who may need to spend a lot of quiet time together with their sick baby.

Respect the privacy of other parents by looking at your own baby and not at other babies on the ward.

Infection is a high risk in Special Care Units, so please make sure that outdoor clothing and bags are not taken into the ward. A family room with lockers is provided for clothes and bags when entering Buscot and you are encouraged to use these.

Hand washing is essential when entering the ward to help safeguard yours and other babies who remain so vulnerable at this time.

Information can only be given over the phone to parents. Please ask your relatives not to phone the ward.

Remember that the staff are there to help. If there's anything you don't understand: ask them or ask us.

We are always just a phone call away.

Babies in Buscot Support (BIBS) is a charitable organisation run on a volunteer basis by parents who have had children in Buscot Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).

It exists to support parents and family of premature and sick newborn babies in the Reading area.

Our charity is devoted to:

Supporting and encouraging the parents of premature and sick newborn babies

Raising the awareness of special care babies and their needs

Fundraising to provide the latest technology and equipment for Buscot ward to ensure that every special care baby has the best start in life possible

BIBS



Babies In Buscot Support

Babies in Buscot Support
Buscot Ward
Royal Berkshire Hospital
Reading
RG1 5AN

<http://www.bibs.org.uk>

Tel: 0845 166 9067

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Expressing Breast Milk - a Babies in Buscot Support guide to special care

Expressing Breast Milk



A Babies in Buscot Support guide to special care

We're not qualified to talk about the benefits of breast milk, nor about the ins and outs of milk production. If you'd like to know more about these topics, there are plenty of people on the ward who can help you.

However, at BIBS we have a lot of mums who have expressed breast milk for their babies in Special Care so what you'll find here is a collection of practical hints and tips our mums have gathered for expressing milk comfortably and effectively.

Start As You Mean To Go On

It's important to start expressing as soon as you can - preferably on the day your baby is born. Try to express as often as you would breastfeed - perhaps every 3 hours to begin with - and don't be put off if it doesn't seem to be working at first.

Keep going because the chances are that you'll get there in the end.

Try a few minutes each side to start with, then build up slowly as your milk comes in. Even very small amounts can be used for your baby, so don't throw anything away. 1ml or 2mls can still give vital nourishment to your little one.

Relax

Unfortunately, the best advice is sometimes the least practical. One of the best keys to successfully expressing milk can be simply to relax.

But we know what it's like to be separated from your baby, what stresses you are under, and how difficult it can be to 'simply relax'. Try having a warm bath before you express, or a warm drink. Put your feet up, make yourself comfortable.

Do It Yourself

There are several different pumps available, including electric and hand pumps. Some mums prefer not to use a pump at all, and find success using their hands. If you are struggling with a particular pump or a particular method of expressing - try another.

If you'd like to try expressing by hand, ask one of the nurses to show you how, or pop in to the Breast Feeding Clinic on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It's open from 11am to 1pm in the parentcraft room which is in Meternity block, level 2. You need not make an appointment. Massaging can help too, and they'll show you how to do this at the clinic.

Association

If you cannot be with your baby while you are expressing, try thinking about him. Have his photo with you to look at, or his blanket to feel and smell. It's also a good idea to use the expressing room on the ward when you have spent time with your baby.

Disassociation

Sometimes, the strain of trying to concentrate on your baby can hamper your efforts, so if thinking about your baby doesn't help, try not thinking about him.

Put the TV on, listen to some music or read a book. Take your mind off what you are doing.

Sugar Shock

Try having a chocolate bar or ice-cream shortly before you start expressing. The rush of sugar can sometimes be the trigger you need.

Timing

If you've tried expressing milk 3-hourly without success, try 4-hourly or even 5-hourly. The important thing is to keep trying.

You may also like to experiment with spending blocks of time on each side, or switching frequently from side to side. Try expressing last thing at night then get a good night's sleep and try again on waking.

Plenty In - Plenty Out

Remember to keep yourself well hydrated while you are expressing - just as you would if you were breastfeeding. Try to drink plenty of water. Tea and coffee can work against you, so try to limit your cuppas.

Weird - But It Works

As strange as it may seem, something in Guinness can help milk production, and so can milk stouts (just one glass!). Some mums have also found success by taking Brewer's Yeast tablets, so you might like to give that a try too.

It's Not The End Of The World!

Try these ideas on their own or in combination. The chances are that you'll get there in the end.

But some of our mums never did get to grips with expressing milk and gave their babies one of the very good formula milks available. So if expressing doesn't work for you, it's not the end of the world. You've done your best.

No-one could ask more.