

BREASTFEEDING TOOLKIT FOR NICU GRADUATES



SMALL STEPS, *BIG* GAINS

PREPARED BY:
SONAL PATEL, MD, CLE
PATTI JAMES, NNP, IBCLC
COURTNEY MASSINA, RN, IBCLC

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SMALL STEPS, *BIG* GAINS



WELCOME!

Small steps, *BIG* gains is a program developed to help mothers of NICU babies achieve their breastfeeding goals. This program was developed by a neonatologist, neonatal nurse practitioner, and neonatal nurse that understand the uniqueness and challenges of that come with the NICU and breastfeeding.

Breastmilk is nutrition and medicine for your baby. Small steps are the process in identifying small doable steps for achieve growth and development in Brain, Immunity, and Gut.

This is a toolkit for you to have concrete guidelines in navigating breastfeeding your NICU baby. Use this toolkit in collaboration with your pediatric provider in achieving your goals. We are here for additional support, guidance and consultation for both you and your pediatric provider.

Thank you for welcoming us into your journey. Please reach out with any questions and concerns.

With Love

Sonal, Patti, and Courtney



PROCESS

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STEP ONE

IDENTIFY YOUR BREASTFEEDING GOALS: THE SIX WEEK PROCESS

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STEP TWO

DEFINING QUALITY BREASTFEEDING.

03

STEP THREE

SCORING

04

STEP FOUR

YOUR TURN!

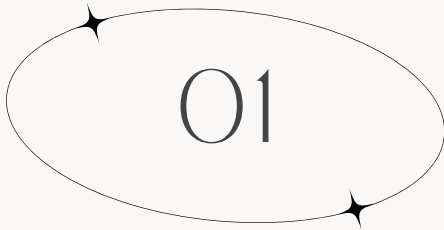
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STEP FIVE

COLLABORATION, CONSULTATION,
RESOURCES



PROCESS



STEP ONE

IDENTIFY YOUR BREASTFEEDING GOALS; THE SIX WEEK PROCESS

Breastfeeding is a journey in which you learn about yourself, your body, your baby and your parenting style. And just like any journey, there are bumps, breakthroughs, peaks, and valleys that force you to reevaluate your goals... and this is normal.

We recommend goals in 2 week segments. Two week segment goals help adjust the post-NICU breastfeeding journey to your baby's growth and development.

Lastly, please know that for most NICU graduates it takes up to 6 weeks post due date to achieve goals of breastfeeding. Therefore, give yourself time and grace for this process.

Use the SMART system of goal setting to help you.



SMART

MY TWO WEEK GOAL

WHEN SETTING GOALS, MAKE SURE IT FOLLOWS THE SMART STRUCTURE. USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO CREATE YOUR GOALS.

S

SPECIFIC

WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?

A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?

T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?



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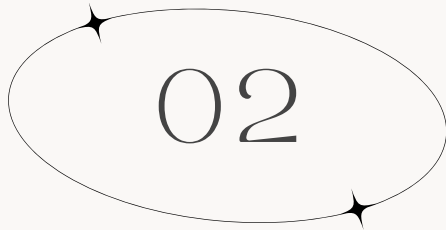
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TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?



PROCESS



STEP TWO

DEFINING QUALITY BREASTFEEDING.

We focus on QUALITY not quantity of breastfeeding because we need to balance a NICU's baby's development and growth. View breastfeeding as a form of "exercise" for NICU graduates. The most important Quantity indicator is not if your baby nursed for 20 minutes but if your baby is ready for the next feed.

QUALITY OF BREASTFEEDING SESSION

1. Strong and Proper Latch
2. Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern
3. Strong Coordinated Suck
4. Audible Swallow Heard
5. Breastfeed for 10-20 minutes
6. Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after said feed



PROCESS

03

STEP THREE

SCORING

Each feeding session (breast or bottle) is assessed and scored. When breastfeeding followed by bottle feeding, score the breastfeeding portion. Based on the total score in a 24 hour period, goals are created for the next 24 hour period.

Quality Score of Individual Feeding Session	Description of Feeds
1	✓ Proper Latch ✓ Strong Coordinated Sucks ✓ Audible Swallow Heard ✓ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern Consistent ✓ Able to Breastfeed > 20 minutes ✓ Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after the said feed
2	✓ Proper Latch ✓ Strong Coordinated Sucks ✓ Audible Swallowing Heard ✓ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern Recognized but Inconsistent ✓ Able to Breastfeed 10-20 minutes but gets tired ✓ Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after the said feed
3	✓ Proper Latch ✓ Coordinated Sucks Present ✓ Difficulty Swallowing ✓ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern not present and needs pacing ✓ Able to Breastfeed for 5-10 minutes ✓ Fatigues During Said Feed
4	✓ Proper Latch ✓ Inconsistent Suck ✓ Difficulty Swallowing ✓ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern not present and requires breaks ✓ Able to Breastfeed for < 5 minutes ✓ Fatigues during said feed

*Adapted from Ludwig and Waltzman



PROCESS

03

STEP THREE

SCORING

Score of Breastfeeding Sessions only

Plan

1s-2s	Can add 1 more breastfeeding session in 24 hour period
Any 3	Keep at current schedule
Any 4	Keep at current schedule and seek professional lactation help

Example of a Feeding Schedule of Premature/NICU babies:

Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duration of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
6 am	BF	20	1
9 am	BF + B	10	2
12 pm	B	20	1
3 pm	B	20	1
6 pm	BF	20	1
9 pm	BF + B	5	3
12 am	B	20	2
3 am	B	20	1

So the score of BF session is 1,2,1,3. Since there is one 3, the mom will keep at current schedule. When bottle feeding remember to always use paced-bottle feeding method. Link: [paced-bottle feeding](#).

PROCESS

04

STEP FOUR

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START.

720-815-5922

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10 am			
1 pm			
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STEP FIVE

COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION

- Collaboration
 - Use this toolkit in conjunction with your Pediatric provider.
 - Recommended weekly growth and development check until goal of breastfeeding achieved and baby thriving.
 - Consultation
 - Working with us directly! *
 - Free 15 minute Consultations. 3 ways to reach us:
 - Go to our website to schedule one;
nayacare.org/freeconsultation
 - Email us at info@nayacare.org
 - Call 720-815-5922
- *prices based on individual need.



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 - Webinar (\$30)
 - We go through this process in detail!
 - One-one consultation via zoom
 - One visit (\$250)
 - Webinar
 - 60 minute consultation
 - Three weeks (\$450)
 - Webinar
 - Initial 60 minute consultation
 - Weekly 30 minute consultation check in
 - Direct access to providers
 - Baby scale
 - 6 weeks (\$750)
 - Webinar
 - Initial 60 minute consultation
 - Weekly 30 minute consultation check in
 - Direct access to providers
 - Baby scale