

Breastfeeding in an Emergency Situation

Every emergency is different. It may be an earthquake, flood, or power failure. It could also be a personal emergency like an illness or a family death. Ultimately, it means that normal daily life is disrupted.

Whether great or small, the main concern for parents in an emergency situation is the health and survival of their children.

Breastfeeding is important to continue in an emergency situation, because during difficult times, many other factors can threaten the health of babies and young children.

Babies who are breastfed have a secure and safe food supply, and they receive antibodies that help to prevent and treat illness.



DO

- ✓ Do continue to breastfeed because you will have an ongoing supply of milk.
- ✓ Do stay with your baby whenever possible.
- ✓ Do express or pump if you must be separated from your baby.
- ✓ Do drink whenever thirsty.
- ✓ Do check with a healthcare provider if you need to start a medication. Most medications are safe for breastfeeding mothers.
- ✓ Do eat all foods available to you in this emergency situation and continue to breastfeed even if you can't eat according to Canada's Food Guide.
- ✓ Do provide skin-to-skin contact with your baby as it maintains their temperature and provides closeness.
- ✓ Do consider re-lactating if you have recently stopped breastfeeding. Contact your local health unit for information.
- ✓ Do hand express if you are trying to build your milk supply or your baby will not accept your breast.

DON'T

- X Don't stop breastfeeding because breastfeeding will provide proper nutrition for your baby and give protection against illnesses.
- X Don't stop breastfeeding because breastfeeding can help to calm you and your baby.
- X Don't introduce formula unless you can ensure safe water, sanitized equipment, proper storage, and a sufficient supply of formula.

Breastfeeding Mothers Kits have been donated to Middlesex County and the City of London for use in their Emergency Evacuation Centres. Kits contain items and information to help support moms to continue breastfeeding in an emergency situation.

Local Breastfeeding Resources

Middlesex-London Health Unit

- Health Connection 519-850-2280
www.healthunit.com

LHSC - Victoria Hospital

- 519-685-8500
www.lhsc.on.ca

Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital

- 519-245-1550
www.mhalliance.on.ca

Motherisk

(Medications & Breastfeeding)

- 416- 813-6780
www.motherisk.org

Electric Breast Pump Sales & Rental (List of Locations)

- Middlesex-London Health Unit
www.healthunit.com
- 519-850-2280



**Breastfeeding protects infants
in an emergency.**

**YOU can help mothers to feed
and protect their children.**

Educate yourself
Educate others
Prepare for an emergency

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An equilateral triangle within a circle is the international symbol for emergency preparedness. The blue triangle represents harmony, balance and calm while the orange circle is the sign of alert and danger. EP and MLHU indicate the commitment of the Middlesex-London Health Unit to Emergency Preparedness.

**For more information on
Emergency Preparedness visit:**
www.healthunit.com/emergency-planning

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BREASTFEEDING



*Guidelines
for Emergency Situations*

www.healthunit.com