Saint Barnabas Medical Center is participating in the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI). This initiative is a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding. SBMC’s goal is to provide patients with information, confidence, and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies.

To receive the prestigious Baby-Friendly Designation, every facility providing maternity services and care for the newborn infants must successfully implement the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.”

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they are separated from their infants.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice “rooming in”—allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

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