



INOVA ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL

INhealth

MOTHER- BABY. *Bonding*

Inova Alexandria
Hospital offers moms
personalized support

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Kelly Escarrega, with newborns Alexander and Benjamin, appreciated Inova Alexandria Hospital's emphasis on skin-to-skin time and breastfeeding.

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MOTHER-BABY

Inova Alexandria Hospital offers moms personalized support

Immediately after giving birth to twins Alexander and Benjamin, Kelly Escarrega enjoyed skin-to-skin contact with them.

After Kelly Escarrega, 36, gave birth to her twin boys at Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) in October, she felt supported from the minute her boys were born. She received breastfeeding assistance from her care team, which included the hospital's lactation consultants.

The day after she gave birth, a lactation consultant spent around 30-40 minutes with her helping latch on the babies. "She helped me with the latching on and just talked about the basics of breastfeeding and how to get my supply going," says Kelly. "She also encouraged me to attend the class they have every day at 10 a.m. in the postpartum unit."

PRESTIGIOUS DESIGNATION

Like Kelly, all moms at IAH receive help from lactation consultants and trained nursing staff who assist mothers in gaining the skills they need to breastfeed. They also benefit from in-house rooming for their newborns and skin-to-skin time. Because of IAH's attention to mother-baby bonding, the hospital recently received the prestigious recognition of being a Baby-Friendly Hospital, a designation from the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). This designation recognizes birthing centers around the world that have outstanding care for breast-feeding and mother-baby bonding.

"This Baby-Friendly designation is exciting because it

recognizes our team's commitment to support a mother in having a successful breastfeeding experience in the first hour of her baby's life," says Monica Brannon, Baby-Friendly Coordinator at IAH. "Less than 350 hospitals are Baby-Friendly-designated in the United States."

According to Jodie Turner, Senior Director of Women's Services at IAH, IAH was the sixth hospital in Virginia area and the first hospital in the Inova system to receive the designation.

"It is a wonderful way of creating a culture where families and babies stay together through the entire hospital stay," she says.

CONSTANT CONTACT

"Rooming in," or allowing mothers to remain with their infants 24 hours a day and feed on demand, benefits both the mom and the baby because the mom starts picking up on the baby's signals, says Barry Rothman, MD, a gynecologist and Women's Unit Medical Director at IAH. But he



Accreditation for Antenatal Testing Center

The Inova Brock Family Antenatal Testing Center at IAH has received accreditation from the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM).

AIUM ultrasound practice accreditation indicates that practices meet or exceed nationally recognized standards in the performance and interpretation of diagnostic ultrasound examinations.



The Inova Brock Family Antenatal Testing Center provides specialized care for pregnancies that are at risk for maternal, fetal or obstetric complications. Its maternal-fetal medicine specialists offer specialized services and care to mothers and their unborn babies, from pre-pregnancy counseling through delivery. To learn more, call **703.504.7868**.

BONDING



Kelly Escarrega, with husband David, liked the support she received at Inova Alexandria Hospital.

adds that if Mom is exhausted and needs a break from rooming in for a bit, she can tell the nurse, who will take the baby to the transitional nursery.

Skin-to-skin contact is also healthy, he says. Data indicates that if there is skin-to-skin contact after birth, there's a decreased risk the baby will have to go to a special care nursery and a better chance the baby won't have complications.

Kelly received immediate skin-to-skin contact with her twin boys after giving birth via Caesarean section at IAH. It was an experience that pleasantly surprised her.

"I was thinking that they'd be whisked away and I wouldn't get to see them, but they put them right on my chest in the operating room," she says. "I had immediate skin-to-skin [contact] with both babies at the same time and that was really nice. They were still caring for the babies and doing what they needed to do, but they were on my chest."

The benefit of skin-to-skin contact is that it helps the baby transition to life outside the uterus. It assists in regulating a number of vital signs, such as the baby's breathing, heart rate, blood sugar and temperature.

ENCOURAGING BREASTFEEDING

For Dr. Rothman, the Baby-Friendly designation is particularly encouraging because of its implications for breastfeeding. "I'm excited about it because the data shows that in the state of Virginia, [the children of] women who breastfeed have a decreased mortality rate," he says. "[The data is] just another push that breastfeeding is good."

Besides having staff expertly trained in breastfeeding, as

The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

These evidence-based steps were developed by a team of global experts. As a Baby-Friendly Hospital, IAH adheres to these steps:

- 1 Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all healthcare staff.
- 2 Train all healthcare 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 should be 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 artificial teats or pacifiers to breastfeeding infants.
- 10 Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

Source: babyfriendlyusa.org

a Baby-Friendly Hospital, IAH has a convenient lactation boutique located on the Family Centered Care Unit that is stocked with breastfeeding products and supplies.

While IAH encourages and supports breastfeeding, it recognizes that feeding decisions are personal for each family. "We want all of our mothers to leave IAH feeling confident in their ability to feed their newborns," Brannon offers.

Notes Kelly, "They were highly supportive of breastfeeding, but I never felt like I was forced into doing it."

A PLACE FOR MOMS

Learn more about maternity services at Inova Alexandria Hospital at inova.org/IAHmom.