

# FAQ – Breast and chestfeeding at Holland Bloorview

Updated Feb. 2024

## What is Holland Bloorview’s position on breast/chestfeeding?

In alignment with Toronto Public Health, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital is a client and family-centred care facility and supports lactating persons to breastfeed, chestfeed, and/or express milk onsite anywhere, anytime.

## Someone is breastfeeding in a waiting area, and I feel uncomfortable.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission [supports the right to breast/chest feed undisturbed in a public place, as protected by law](#). Breast/chestfeeding individuals cannot be asked to cover up, move to another area, or leave the facility.

## Someone has told me they feel uncomfortable with me nursing in a public area of the hospital. What can I do?

If someone expresses discomfort with you nursing in public, you might consider the following steps:

**Know Your Rights:** Understand that you have a legal right to breast/chestfeed in public spaces in Ontario.

**Respond Politely:** If you feel comfortable, you can inform the person that you are within your rights to breast/chestfeed here. A calm and polite response can often defuse the situation.

**Seek Support:** If the individual persists or the situation escalates, you may seek support from hospital staff or management. They should be aware of the laws regarding breastfeeding and can assist in resolving the situation.

**Report Discrimination:** If you feel that you are being discriminated against or harassed because of breastfeeding, you can file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

**Use Available Resources:** Some hospitals have designated breastfeeding areas for those who prefer privacy. While you are under no obligation to use these areas, knowing about them can be helpful if you wish to move away from an uncomfortable situation.

Remember, the decision to breast/chestfeed in public is entirely yours, and you are legally protected in making this choice.

## **I would like to nurse in a more private space.**

Lactating persons are welcome to breastfeed, chestfeed, and/or express milk anywhere, anytime in the hospital. We acknowledge that some individuals prefer privacy while nursing. Those who prefer a semi-private, quieter space are welcome to use our designated breast/chestfeeding-friendly spaces in the Grocery Foundation Resource Centre and by second floor reception in the West wing.

## **What is chestfeeding?**

- Chestfeeding is feeding a child with milk from one's chest. It can also involve using a feeding tube attached to the nipple to feed a child if lactation is not a possibility.
- "Chestfeeding" is a gender-neutral term that anyone can use and most often used by trans masculine and non-binary people. It is often used because some individuals feel terms such as "breastfeeding" do not match how they identify their anatomy.
- A transgender man may use the term "chestfeeding" if they had chest masculinization surgery, also known as top surgery, to remove breast tissue.
- A non-binary individual may feel more comfortable using the term "chestfeeding," as it is not associated with any particular gender or identity.
- Cisgender women may use this term because of past trauma that they have experienced, and they may feel uncomfortable using other terms to describe feeding their children.

For more information on Holland Bloorview's breast and chestfeeding initiative, [visit our website.](#)