



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Communications
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

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13 hospitals to receive awards for supporting breastfeeding

DENVER--Thirteen hospitals from across Colorado will receive awards from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for their efforts in supporting breastfeeding with new mothers.

The award ceremony honoring “Breastfeeding Supportive” hospitals will be held Friday, Aug. 5, from 10:45-11:15 a.m. in the Sabin/Cleere Conference Room at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, in Denver.

Jennifer Dellaport, the department’s breastfeeding coordinator, said, “Breastfeeding has been shown to improve the health of the mother and her infant. The longer and more exclusively a baby is breastfed, the less likely the baby is at risk for developing certain immune illnesses and becoming obese. Hospitals such as these receiving awards today extend breastfeeding by at least two months, helping new mothers get a good start on keeping their babies healthy.”

Hospitals receiving a Breastfeeding Excellence Starts Today (BEST) award include:

Aspen

Aspen Valley Hospital

Boulder

Boulder Community Hospital

Colorado Springs

Memorial Health System

Denver

Denver Health Medical Center
Rose Medical Center

Fort Collins

Poudre Valley Hospital

Fort Morgan

Colorado Plains Medical Center

Grand Junction

St. Mary's Hospital & Regional Medical Center

Greeley

North Colorado Medical Center

Lafayette

Exempla Good Samaritan Medical Center

Loveland

McKee Medical Center

Salida

Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center

Thornton

North Suburban Medical Center

The awardees represent hospitals that have implemented the Colorado's Can Do 5! hospital initiative which includes the following five breastfeeding practices:

1. The infant is breastfed in the first hour after birth.
2. The infant is fed only breast milk in the hospital.
3. The infant stays in the same room with the mother in the hospital.
4. The infant does not use a pacifier in the hospital.
5. Hospital gives the mother a telephone number to call for help with breastfeeding after discharged from the hospital.

With the help of Colorado hospitals, 88.7 percent of new mothers statewide begin breastfeeding their babies. However, only 22.5 percent of Colorado mothers exclusively breastfeed through six months of age as recommended numerous national and state officials. "We do well with mothers initiating breastfeeding in Colorado. They understand the importance of breastfeeding. Our weakness is the lack of support mothers receive to get the good start with breastfeeding they need to continue longer," said Dellaport.

She said returning to work is often cited as a barrier for new mothers. "Many employers aren't aware that Colorado law preempts federal law and requires employers with one or more employees to provide break time and a private, clean space for breastfeeding or expressing milk."

For more information about Colorado's breastfeeding efforts, visit www.breastfeedcolorado.com.