

## **Before you go home, make sure that:**

### ***You can feed your baby***

- Are you able to position your baby for good attachment at your breast?
- Do you know the signs of effective breastfeeding?
- Do you know about baby-led, or demand feeding, and how your baby shows that he/she is hungry or has had enough milk?
- Do you know what to do if you think that you do not have enough milk?
- Are you able to express your milk?



*If you are not breastfeeding, you need to know:*

- What type of replacement feeding to use that is acceptable, feasible, affordable, sustainable and safe for your situation.
- How to obtain the replacement milk in sufficient quantities.
- How to safely prepare and feed the replacement milk to your baby.
- How to reduce the risks associated with replacement feeding.

### ***You know the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding***

- Breast milk provides all your baby needs for the first six months. After six months, your baby needs foods in addition to breast milk.
- Breast milk continues to provide good nutrition and protection from illness as well as closeness to the mother. Breast milk is valuable into the second year and longer.
- If your baby is not breastfed, infant formula should continue to be used until your baby is at least 12 months old. Though some parents give other foods early, most babies do not need any foods except breast milk or formula until after six months.

### ***You know how to get the support that you need***

- Mothers need support. When a mother goes home she needs a family member, friend, health worker or other person who will help her to become confident learn about caring for her baby.
- Sometimes a mother thinks that she should be able to do everything without needing any help. She may think that if she looks for help it will be thought that she is a bad mother or cannot cope.
- When any of us learn a new job or skill we need to take time to learn it and we may need to ask for help from other people. It is similar with learning to be a mother – there are new skills to learn, so ask for help to learn the skills.
- Find out:

What support the maternity unit can give after discharge.

Where to find your Public Health Nurse and baby clinic.

What support groups are in your area and how to contact these groups.

Who can provide one-to-one help with feeding your baby, if you have difficulty.



**If you need more information or help  
— ask for it.**