

# Breastfeeding (Chestfeeding) After Surgery Patient Education

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NURSING

## Background

- Pre/Post/PACU RNs reported that multiple surgical patients received conflicting instructions on when to resume breastfeeding (chestfeeding) postoperatively and if they need to “pump & dump” milk after surgery due to the perioperative medications they received.
- RNs recognized they lacked the knowledge and confidence to effectively support patients who were breastfeeding (chestfeeding).

## Purpose

- The purpose of the project was to create a patient education tool and empower the RNs with their post-operative breastfeeding (chestfeeding) education.

## Literature Review

A comprehensive literature search was conducted. From the literature synthesis:

- Patients do not need to “pump & dump” milk after surgery and may resume breastfeeding (chestfeeding) as soon as they are awake with family or RN support.
- Trace amounts of medication may transfer into human milk. Commonly used perioperative medications with safe Reduced Infant Dose (RID) are available on the ASA website.
- Using gender-inclusive terms such as “chestfeeding” verses “breastfeeding” helps ensure all patients feel supported.

## Methods

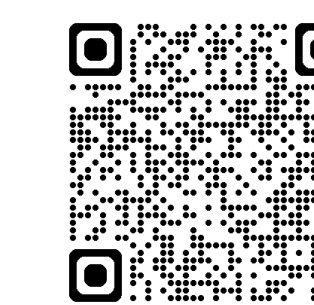
### Step 1

- A root cause analysis revealed a lack of post-operative breastfeeding (chestfeeding) education tools, as well as an RN knowledge deficit and low confidence when educating patients on when to resume breastfeeding (chestfeeding) after surgery.

### Step 2

- Pre/Post/PACU Unit Council conducted a literature review and created a patient education tool along with a “Breastfeeding (Chestfeeding) After Surgery” staff resource binder.
- The patient education tool is available on the hospital’s intranet and as a smart phrase in the electronic medical record to make including the education into the discharge instructions easy.

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### Step 3

- Two RN champions educated 43 RNs. Unit Council monitored the breastfeeding (chestfeeding) education tool’s usage.
- A survey was sent to the Pre/Post/PACU RNs to gauge staff perceptions pre-implementation and post-implementation.

## Results (Continued)

- The post-implementation survey revealed substantial improvement in staff knowledge and confidence compared with the pre-implementation survey results.
- Four months after implementation, no patients have reported conflicting information about when to resume breastfeeding (chestfeeding).

## Conclusions

- Creation and implementation of an evidence-based postoperative breastfeeding (chestfeeding) education tool improved RN knowledge and comfort with patient education, increased RN awareness and usage of gender inclusive terms, and decreased patient confusion.

## Next Steps

- A survey will be distributed again at 6 months to assess RN perceptions.
- This education will be included in the orientation for new onboarding RNs.

## References

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- Moore, C.B., et al. (2021). Resuming breastfeeding after surgery: Influencing practice recommendations. *Journal of Perianesthesia Nurses*, 36(5), 460-467

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## Results

### Breastfeeding (Chestfeeding) RN Perception Survey

