



Quality Breastfeeding Care: IBCLCs in Action

International Board Certified Lactation Consultants:

- Are allied health care professionals who demonstrate through a rigorous exam that they possess skills and knowledge to assist mothers and babies with complex breastfeeding situations.
- Abide by Standards of Practice and a Code of Ethics for providing lactation care and clinical management.
- Include nurses, dietitians, physicians, midwives, educators, social workers, and counselors.
- Practice in hospitals, neonatal intensive care units and special nurseries, private clinics and physician offices, public health agencies, and in their own private practices.

The IBCLC assists mothers in a variety of situations:

- Prenatal breastfeeding assessment and counseling
- Positioning and latch of an infant
- Prevention and management of maternal concerns such as breast pain and engorgement
- Issues concerning milk production
- Breastfeeding management when a child gains weight slowly
- Premature babies
- Breastfeeding infants with neurological deficits or physical disabilities
- Suck difficulties that interfere with breastfeeding
- Separation of the mother and baby due to work, medical, or educational issues

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IBCLCs help improve breastfeeding rates.

Delivering in a hospital that employed an IBCLC was associated with a 2.28 times increase in the odds of breastfeeding at hospital discharge. Among women receiving Medicaid, delivering at a hospital that employed IBCLCs was associated with a 4.13 times increase in the odds of breastfeeding at hospital discharge.

Castrucci, B., et al. 2006. A Comparison of Breastfeeding Rates in an Urban Birth Cohort Among Women Delivering Infants at Hospitals That Employ and Do Not Employ Lactation Consultants. *Journal of Public Health Management Practice*. 12(6), 578–585.

Women who receive prenatal education, postpartum hospital and home visit, and telephone calls from a lactation consultant are more likely to breastfeed through week 20 and at a higher breastfeeding intensity than women who do not receive assistance from a lactation consultant.

Bonuck, K., et al. 2005. Randomized controlled trial of a prenatal and postnatal lactation consultant intervention on duration and intensity of breastfeeding up to 12 months. *Pediatrics*. 116:6, 1413-26.

Guise, JM, et al. 2003. The effectiveness of primary care-based interventions to promote breastfeeding: systematic evidence review and meta-analysis for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. *Annals of Family Medicine*. 1:2, 70-8.

IBCLCs help improve health outcomes for breastfeeding mothers.

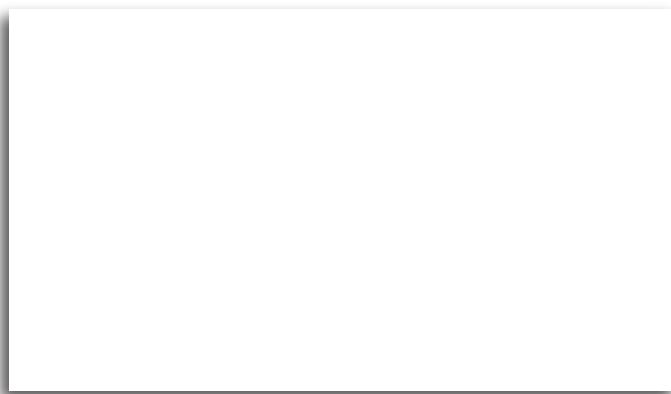
Women are more likely to stop breastfeeding in the first month when they experience such problems as sore nipples, inadequate milk production, and infant difficulties with breastfeeding. A lactation consultant can help women overcome these difficulties and thereby increase duration of breastfeeding.

Ahluwalia, I. 2005. Why Do Women Stop Breastfeeding? Findings from the Pregnancy Risk Assessment and Monitoring System. *Pediatrics*. 116:6, 1408-1412.

How an IBCLC can help new families in your setting:

- Conduct assessments of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in hospital or private clinics
- Provide prenatal and postnatal education and counseling
- Make hospital rounds with all new breastfeeding mothers
- Triage for medical conditions that need to be referred
- Staff an outpatient breastfeeding clinic
- Provide inpatient and outpatient breastfeeding support services
- Assist breastfeeding mothers experiencing difficulties
- Lead support group meetings for new mothers
- Conduct follow-up with breastfeeding mothers post-discharge
- Teach about milk expression (either by hand, or with a pump) and provide safe storage guidelines for expressed breastmilk
- Provide in-services for staff in the area of lactation management and support
- Develop and implement breastfeeding protocols

Contact a Local IBCLC!



For more information about the role of an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, or to locate a lactation consultant in your community, visit the “Find a Lactation Consultant Directory” at the Web site for the International Lactation Consultant Association at www.ilca.org.



International Lactation Consultant Association
2501 Aerial Center Pkwy, Ste. 103 • Morrisville, NC 27560
phone: 919.861.5577 • fax: 919.459-2075
e-mail: info@ilca.org