



ILCA Print and Multimedia Reviews December 2010 – Available at www.ILCA.org

Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple: A Guide for Helping Mothers

Nancy Mohrbacher, IBCLC, FILCA

Hale Publishing, 2010

905 pages, illustrated, references, appendices, index, US\$79.95, hardcover

Orders: Hale Publishing, LP, 1712 N. Forest St, Amarillo TX 79106 USA

Tel: 806-376-9900, fax: 806-376-9901

E-mail: books@halepublishing.com; URL: www.ibreastfeeding.com

This volume is organized around three themes: the mother-baby relationship, the baby, and the mother. In addition to the expected topics, such as inborn infant feeding behaviors, effective counseling, establishing and maintaining milk production, health issues for both mother and baby (e. g. jaundice), nutrition, employment, and maternal medications, to name only a few, recent hot topics are well covered. These include reverse pressure softening, breast anatomy, the late preterm infant, the WHO growth charts, biological nurturing, and the vitamin D controversy. Each chapter has convenient tabs and references, and many list additional resources for professionals and parents. Tables, line drawings and photographs throughout the book complement the text, illustrating and summarizing complex information. Despite its large size, the book opens flat and is easy to use, with wide margins for notes, a comprehensive index, cross-referencing to related topics, and short summaries in the margins. My only complaint is that the photographs are dark and grainy, making it difficult to see some details. A future edition may benefit from including cross-nursing and sharing breast pumps.

The introductory chapters and the appendices make this book a particularly helpful resource. The book begins with a summary of current information about working with the biology and natural skills of mothers and babies. It describes inborn infant feeding behaviors and reflexes, as well as triggers for those behaviors, and infant states and positioning that promote them. Then it discusses helping mothers respond to their babies intuitively. Rather than teaching specific positions at the breast, there are descriptions of ways to help mothers and babies find their own most comfortable position. The next chapter covers the establishment of breastfeeding in the context of biology and culture. It discusses common birth and parenting choices (birth interventions, mother-baby separation, feeding schedules, sleep, swaddling, pacifiers) and which choices best support successful breastfeeding. The four appendices summarize breastfeeding techniques, tools, and products (alternative feeding methods, pumps, shells, ointments, nipple shields, scales), helping mothers work with healthcare professionals, and WHO growth charts.

Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple is the most useful general breastfeeding reference I have encountered. I recommend it to anyone who works with breastfeeding mothers.

Adria Cannon, BS, IBCLC
Madison, Wisconsin USA