

Breastfeeding Terms & Definitions for Classification in Alberta

Monitoring breastmilk intake is an important population health indicator; as such, all Alberta Health Services (AHS) Zones collect breastfeeding information.

This information is based on breastfeeding definitions created by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, adapted to the Alberta context by the Alberta Breastfeeding Committee in collaboration with Alberta Health and AHS, and approved by the 2009 Health Information Standards Committee for Alberta. All maternal/infant health care providers must be familiar with and accurately apply the Government of Alberta definitions outlined below to support the collection of relevant, accurate, and consistent breastfeeding data.

Key breastfeeding-related terms and definitions for breastfeeding data collection

For the data collection terms below, **breastmilk** is defined as including breastfeeding, expressed breastmilk, or donor human milk. It does not exclude undiluted drops or syrups consisting of vitamins, mineral supplements, or medicines.

Term	Definition
Exclusive Breastmilk Only breastmilk since birth	No food or liquid other than breastmilk—not even water— is given to the infant from birth by the mother, health care provider, or family member/supporter.
Total Breastmilk Only breastmilk in past 7 days but other fluids prior	No food or liquid other than breastmilk—not even water— is given to the infant by the mother, health care provider, or family member/supporter during the past 7 days. (This definition identifies infants who are totally breastfeeding at the time of data collection. There are many infants who receive supplement(s) at some point but are totally breastfeeding following this temporary intervention. However, based on the above definition, they can no longer be classified as having exclusive breastmilk).
Predominant Breastmilk Breastmilk plus other fluids 1 or 2 times in past 7 days	Breastmilk given by the mother, health care provider or family member/supporter plus 1 or a maximum of 2 feeds of liquid, including non-human milk during the past 7 days.
Partial Breastmilk	Breastmilk given by the mother, health care provider, or family member/supporter plus 3 or more feeds of any liquid, including non-human milk during the past 7 days.

For more information, contact the Early Years Health Promotion team at eyhp@ahs.ca
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Breastmilk plus other fluids 3 or more times in past 7 days	
No Breastmilk in past 7 days	The infant/child has received no breastmilk in the past 7 days.
Solid Foods & Only Breastmilk in past 7 days	Solid foods and only breastmilk in the past 7 days.
Solid Foods, Other Liquids & Breastmilk in past 7 days	Solid foods, other liquids, and breastmilk in the past 7 days.
Solid Foods & No Breastmilk in past 7 days	The infant/child has received no breastmilk in the past 7 days.
NPO – Nothing by Mouth in past 7 days	Nothing by mouth in the past 7 days (e.g., no oral, gavage or tube feedings).