



Breastfeeding Empowering Language in Medical Settings

by Amy Barron Smolinski, MA, ALC, CLC

Goal:

Informed decision-making and consent through productive dialogue ending in a treatment plan that is best for patient, based on patient (or parent) defined needs.

Helpful phrases:

- We're on the same team here. We both want what's best for me/my child. I need to understand exactly what you are recommending so I can be comfortable with the decision we make together.
- I'm not sure I understand. Can you explain this part again?
- I'd like to see the policy.
- I'm a parent trying to do what's best for my child. Please have patience with me as I try to figure this out.
- I am feeling overwhelmed and I need a few minutes to think about this.
- I would like a second opinion.

Questions:

- What exactly is your recommendation/concern? Why are you recommending this course of action? How long will this course of action take? What kind of commitment will it take from me?
- What is the desired outcome of this course of action? Follow up: How will that benefit my child?
- What are the risks or possible undesired outcomes of this course of action?
- What are alternatives to this course of action?
- How can we work together to find a course of action that will address the concern and meet my needs and my child's needs?
- What if we wait on taking this course of action?
- How familiar are you with this issue? How many cases like this have you treated?
- What is the scientific basis for this recommendation?

Resources:

Mom2Mom Global Breastfeeding Resources <https://www.mom2momglobal.org/breastfeeding-links>

Breastfeeding in Combat Boots Military Policies and Information

<https://www.mom2momglobal.org/breastfeeding-in-combat-boots>

Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine <https://www.bfmed.org>

U.S. Breastfeeding Committee <https://www.usbreastfeeding.org>

Evidence-based resources for medications and breastfeeding

<http://infantrisk.com> (Apps MommyMeds and InfantRisk for iPhone and Android)

<https://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/newtoxnet/lactmed.htm> (App for iPhone and Android)