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BETH ISRAEL MEDICAL CENTER “BANS THE BAG”
*New York City Hospital Joins National Campaign to Stop the Marketing of
Baby Formula to New Moms*

New York, NY (August 24, 2009) Beth Israel Medical Center has joined a national campaign to halt baby formula manufacturing companies from marketing in hospitals by stopping its practice of giving out formula gift bags to maternity patients at discharge.

“Overwhelming evidence has shown that giving away diaper bags containing formula and other marketing materials for the companies that manufacture them undermines breastfeeding mothers and promotes the sale of expensive, brand-name formulas,” says Susan Rothenberg, MD, FACOG, Associate Director of Obstetrics at Beth Israel Medical Center (BI). “As an alternative gift to new families, we are giving away infant bodysuits, called ‘Onesies,’ with the phrase ‘I’m a BI Baby,’ printed on the front.”

Although New York City’s Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC), the largest municipal hospital and healthcare system in the country, discontinued the practice of formula giveaways some time ago, Beth Israel is one of the few private hospitals that have done so.

Beth Israel has been recognized by BanTheBags.org, the official Web site for the national campaign, as a hospital that “markets health and nothing else.”

If you have additional questions or would like to speak with Dr. Rothenberg, please contact Elizabeth Dowling in the public affairs office at: 212-523-4047.

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