

Off to a Good Start with Breastfeeding



Hand express a few droplets of milk before you start to spark your baby's curiosity and to allow them to smell and taste your milk. Hold your breast and stroke your baby's lips with your nipple. When your baby opens their mouth wide, help them latch on. Your baby should have a deep latch and not just be on your nipple. It will take time for your baby to learn how to stay latched on to the breast to nurse. Keep repeating this until your baby has learned to latch on and nurse for about 15 minutes on each side. The average feeding time is 30 minutes total.

Feeding Cues

Feed your baby on-demand. This means to feed your baby when they are showing feeding cues or early signs of hunger. These feeding cues may look like your baby licking their lips, looking around, opening their mouth wide, and sucking on their hands. Crying is a late feeding cue. Feeding your baby when they show early signs of hunger can help facilitate smoother breastfeeding.

Nurse Frequently

Your baby will need to nurse 8-12 times every 24 hours. It's common for babies to be sleepy, you may need to wake them up to nurse. You can tickle their shoulders, back, ears, feet, or palms of their hands. You can also undress them or change their diaper before or in the middle of a feeding to help wake them up.

Listen to your Baby's Body Language

Your baby will show you by body language when they are hungry or full. Closed clenched fists near their face means they are still hungry. Open hands down by their side let you know that they are satisfied and full. If your baby acts hungry again in 30 minutes after a feeding, they could be hungry again, need a diaper change, need to be burped, or just want to be held by you. If you have taken care of those things and your baby is still fussy, let them return to the breast to feed more. You are not spoiling your baby by nursing them or holding them often, you are taking care of your baby's needs.

Delay Formula

Exclusively breastfeeding for the first 2-4 weeks of your baby's life will ensure that your body produces just the right amount of breastmilk for your baby. This also gives your baby time to learn how to suck correctly and efficiently. Introducing formula or a bottle too early can impact your milk supply and may cause your baby to prefer the bottle over the breast. Reach out to your pediatrician or lactation consultant if you're considering introducing formula.

Practice Paced-Bottle Feeding

If you're planning on offering a bottle with either breastmilk or formula, but wish to continue nursing, then paced-bottle feeding is an important method to use! Hold the bottle horizontal with the floor and allow your baby to suck the milk from the bottle, rather than gravity dumping milk into your baby's mouth. This method mimics breastfeeding by making your baby work for the milk in the bottle, the same way they have to work at the breast. This method also helps prevent your baby from developing flow-preference to the bottle.



Common questions

How can I tell if my baby is getting enough?

- Your baby is alert and active
- Your baby appears happy and satisfied after breastfeeding
- You're breastfeeding at least 8 times in 24 hours
- Your baby is back up to birth weight by day 10-14 and is gaining at least 5oz or 140g each week
- Your baby is having 3 or more poops and 6 or more wet diapers by day 5
- Your baby's poops are transitioning from meconium to yellow-seedy stools



How do I prepare to go back to work if I am breastfeeding?

If you are returning to school or work soon after your baby is born, it is best to make a plan about how to work and breastfeed. Discuss with your employer your plans to breastfeed. You can use a breast pump to collect and store milk for your baby to have while you are at work. You should start to pump a week or two before you return to work to ensure you have a good supply.



Please visit
www.readysetbabyonline.com
for more breastfeeding
information



Your baby needs to learn how to coordinate latch, suck, swallow, and breathe.

If your baby is sleepy, remove all their clothes except for a diaper.
Place baby skin-to-skin.

Hand express a few drops of your milk and rub it on baby's lips.

Make sure your baby has a deep latch and nursing is comfortable.

Why do my breasts hurt when my baby nurses?

You may feel pain or experience nipple damage if your baby is not positioned properly or not latching on correctly to breastfeed. Ensure that your baby has a deep, asymmetrical latch. Speak with a lactation consultant for help with positioning and latching.

Can my baby be fed both breast milk and formula?

Feeding your baby formula in place of breast milk in the first month can decrease your milk supply. If your baby gets full with formula and does not breastfeed, your breasts will make less milk. If your baby is not nursing at the breast, replace nursing with pumping to ensure your breasts get regular stimulation. You can pump and offer your pumped milk via spoon, cup, syringe, or bottle if desired.

Breastfeeding
takes practice.

Be kind to yourself.

Reach out if you need
support.

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