



Supporting the birth that is right for you!

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## Tips for Success with Breastfeeding

*By Rebecca Pugh*

- Get an early start: Put baby to the breast to nurse as soon after birth as possible.
- A baby needs to nurse 10-12 times in a 24-hour cycle. The more you nurse the more your milk supply will increase. Frequent breastfeeding stimulates milk production and reduces engorgement.
- To latch on: Sit back comfortably in a well-supported position, do not lean over the baby. Support your breast with one hand. Place the baby's head in the crook of your elbow. Pull the baby's feet in close to your other side. Hold baby at the level of your breast. The baby's face and body should be turned in to face your body. Tickle the baby's lower lip with your breast and wait for her to open wide, then pull the baby in close to you when ready to latch on. The baby should be holding as much of the areola in her mouth as possible.
- Baby's need night feedings: Human milk is easily digested and passes quickly through the digestive system, therefore a baby needs to eat every 2-3 hours throughout the night. A newborn may be sleepy and may need to be awakened to feed.
- Watch your baby, not the clock: Learn the signs of hunger such as turning toward the breast, opening the mouth/rooting reflex, and bringing her hands to her mouth. Once the baby is crying she has been hungry for too long. Learn these signs and anticipate hunger according to her schedule and cues. Some baby's may need to be awakened to be fed.
- Enough Milk? : After your milk comes in, around day 3-4 postpartum, a baby should have 6-8 wet diapers in 24 hours and 3-5 bowel movements per day. This confirms the baby is well fed and hydrated.
- Remember: Correct positioning and latch on techniques are the solution to most breastfeeding problems.
- Keep nipples clean and dry: Do not scrub the nipples or use soaps to wash them. Use pure lanolin on nipples to treat or prevent dry, cracking, chapped, or raw nipples.
- To remove the baby from your breast: Break the suction first by inserting a clean, small finger into the baby's mouth or gently pull down on her chin. Tugging on the nipples can cause irritation.
- Foremilk and Hindmilk: The milk expressed during the beginning of the feeding is more liquid and satisfies the baby's thirst. The milk expressed later is creamier and has more fat content, which satisfies hunger and adds to weight gain. Both are very important. To encourage the expression of hindmilk make sure you are nursing for at least 20 minutes.
- Discourage the use of pacifiers and bottles before breastfeeding has been well established. Pacifiers and bottles are "band-aid" solutions to most breastfeeding problems. With help, see if you can get to the root of the problem.
- Questions? : Call your midwife or lactation consultant.



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## **Tips for Success with Breastfeeding** (continued)

### **THE ADVANTAGES OF BREASTFEEDING FOR MOTHER AND INFANT**

- Breastfeeding protects babies from disease: The frequency and severity of many childhood illnesses such as ear infections, colds, and even chronic conditions such as asthma is greatly reduced because of breastfeeding. They have a lower incidence of diarrhea, sepsis, gastroenteritis, and some forms of childhood cancer, among other illnesses.
- Breastmilk increases IQ: Fatty acids and other nutrients found in breastmilk facilitate the healthy development of the brain and lead to higher IQ levels that last into adulthood.
- Exclusive Breastfeeding: When babies are breastfed only they exhibit a “dose response” to breastmilk. This means that the longer and more frequently a baby is breastfed, the more the immune response increases. They are then more greatly protected from childhood leukemia and lymphoma, obesity, and respiratory infections and other illnesses.
- Breastfeeding develops the immune system: Human milk contains immunoglobulins, leukocytes, and anti-inflammatory factors that help a baby’s immune system to develop after birth.
- Human milk contains properties that destroy the cells of many types of cancer, HIV, and chlamydia. Research on breastmilk has led scientists to make new developments in the search for the cure for these diseases.
- Breastfeeding is affordable: It does not require expensive equipment or accessories.
- Postpartum stress is reduced among mothers who breastfeed.
- Breastfeeding reduces a woman’s risk of developing breast cancer.
- Babies who receive human breastmilk have a reduced chance of developing type 2 diabetes and obesity.
- Breastfeeding facilitates bonding between you and your baby. It is a special time of sensory input for the baby as she smells you, hears you, makes eye contact with you, and feels the comfort of your presence.