

A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking down at a baby she is holding. The baby is looking up at her. The background is a soft, light-colored gradient with a yellow circular shape behind the text.

How to Breastfeed your baby

Breastfeeding: the natural choice for a healthy start

Breastfeeding is the natural way to feed your baby. Your body is making milk and your baby expects to breastfeed. Enjoy this special time with your baby!



*To all women who give their children
breast milk – this booklet has been
lovingly prepared with you in mind.
Read and refer to it often. Thank you for
teaching us as much as we have taught you
about the important gift of breastfeeding.*

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Getting Off to a Good Start

- 💧 Every baby needs skin-to-skin time.
- 💧 For at least the first 60-90 minutes after birth, snuggle your baby on your bare chest.
- 💧 Baby should be wearing no more than a diaper and a hat.
- 💧 Baby will enjoy skin-to-skin contact with both parents several times a day through infancy.



*“Holding my
baby skin-to-skin
was a wonderful bonding
experience!
He was very calm
and awake.”*

—WIC participant

- 💧 Keep your baby close to you during your hospital stay and after you get home.
- 💧 Put your baby’s needs first. Limit visitors while you get to know your baby.
- 💧 Your breasts may not feel full for the first few days.
- 💧 Breastfeed early and often to make plenty of milk for your baby.
- 💧 Call WIC with questions or concerns about your milk supply.

Holding Your Baby for Breastfeeding

There is no right or wrong way to breastfeed, as long as you and your baby are comfortable. Here are some examples of ways to hold your baby for breastfeeding:



"When my baby was born, I laid back, put her on my chest, and she latched on by herself!"



Laid-back Breastfeeding



Football Hold



Cross Cradle Hold



Cradle Hold

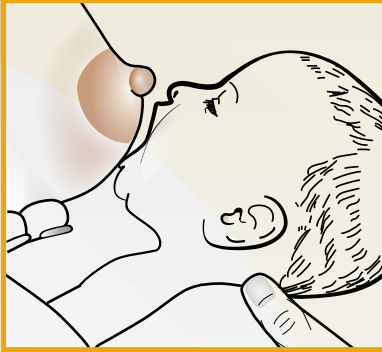


Side-lying Position

Four Steps to a Great Latch

*Most babies will latch on well.
Follow these four steps to a great latch.*

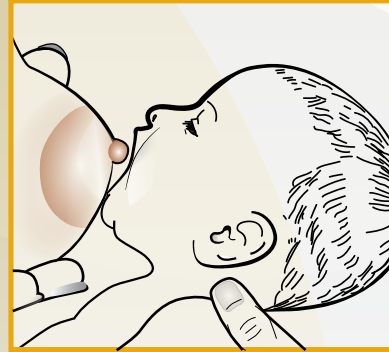
STEP 1



Position baby tummy to tummy, with ear, shoulder and hip in a straight line.

Point your nipple to baby's nose.

STEP 2



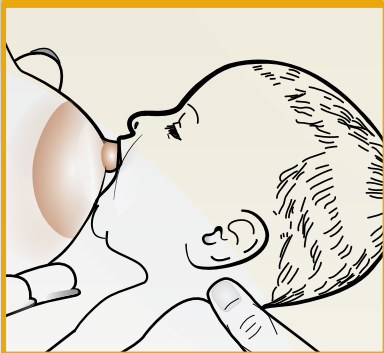
As baby opens mouth at the smell of your milk, let baby's head tilt back.

Now your nipple is pointed at the roof of baby's mouth. Bring baby to the breast, chin first.

"My breasts hurt when I first started nursing. I called my peer at WIC. She helped my baby to latch better. Everything was great after that!"

—WIC participant

STEP 3



Baby's chin and cheeks should be pressed into your breast.

Baby's nose will be clear of the breast or will touch slightly.

STEP 4



This is what you will see when baby is latched on.

If the latch is not comfortable, take baby off the breast by putting your finger into the corner of mouth between gums to break the suction, and try to latch again.

Building Your Milk Supply

The more your baby breastfeeds, the more breast milk you make. The first milk, called colostrum, is the perfect first food. It protects your baby and has everything your baby needs.

- 💡 The amount of colostrum you have is just right for your baby's very small tummy.
- 💡 Your baby is nursing for as often and for as long as desired, and at least eight or more times in 24 hours.
- 💡 If you plan to use a bottle or pacifier, wait until your baby is at least three to four weeks old. Bottles and pacifiers can decrease your milk supply.

Baby's Stomach Size



DAY 1
about the size of a
large marble



DAY 3
about the size of a
ping pong ball



DAY 10
about the size of an egg



Baby's Hunger Signs

Signs of hunger are:

- ◆ Smacking lips or sucking sounds.
- ◆ Bringing one or both hands to mouth.
- ◆ Moving head from side to side.
- ◆ Making a fist.
- ◆ Making faces as if about to cry.
- ◆ Fussing sounds.



“Now that I can tell my baby is hungry before he cries, latching is much easier.”

—WIC participant



Be sure to watch for hunger signs and feed your baby before crying starts.

Getting Enough Milk

After the first few days, your breasts should feel more full of milk. Your baby has ways to show you he/she is getting enough:

- 💧 Baby has four or more dirty diapers and at least five or six wet diapers every day.
- 💧 Baby is nursing for as often and for as long as desired, *and* at least eight or more times in 24 hours.
- 💧 Your breasts feel softer after each feeding.
- 💧 Your baby may lose weight at first, but should be back to birth weight by 10-14 days.



*See page 21 for a
breastfeeding log
and diaper diary.*

Have your baby weighed at WIC anytime!

Diapers: What to Expect



All babies' first poop is black and sticky. Baby should have one wet diaper per day.

- A baby's poop should change colors within the first week.
- After four to six weeks, your baby may have fewer bowel movements, sometimes skipping a few days. This is normal for a baby who only drinks breast milk.

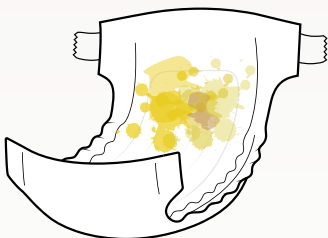


By day three or four breastfed babies' poop turns green. Baby should have three or four wet diapers per day.



"I don't mind changing my breastfed baby's diaper because it doesn't stink!"

—WIC participant



By day five, breastfed babies' poop turns yellow and can look seedy or watery. This is not diarrhea. Baby should have five or six wet diapers per day.



If you don't see these changes, call WIC.

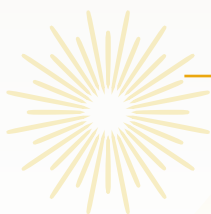
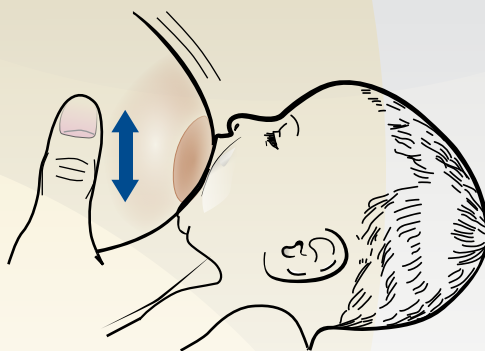
How to Wake a Sleepy Baby

A sleepy, quiet newborn baby is not always a good sign. At first, babies will need to eat often to help them get enough nutrition to grow. If your baby does not wake often enough to nurse at least eight times in 24 hours, or at least every three hours, you should wake your baby by:

- ◆ Undressing and changing diaper.
- ◆ Holding baby skin-to-skin on your chest.
- ◆ Rubbing, patting, or walking your fingers along baby's back or feet.

If your baby falls asleep at the breast, breast compression can help keep your baby awake.

- ◆ While baby is at breast, put your fingers under your breast and thumb on top to make a C shape with your hand.
- ◆ When you no longer see or hear regular swallowing, compress the breast gently but firmly. This may result in baby sucking and swallowing once again.



“My baby kept falling asleep while breastfeeding, so my peer helper taught me how to do breast compression. It helped to keep her awake!”

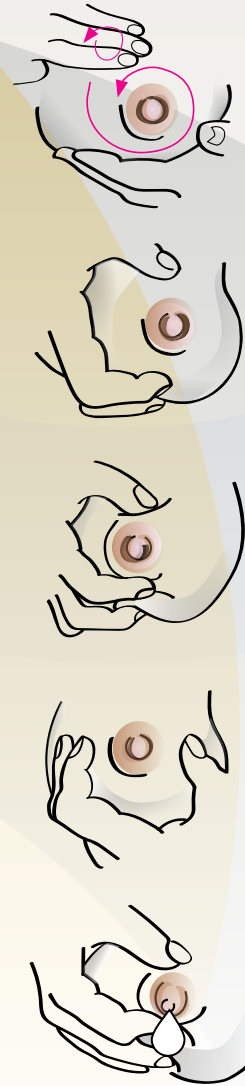
—WIC participant

Hand Expression

Hand expression can be used instead of a pump to relieve pressure, help baby latch, and collect milk.

How to hand express:

1. Sit up and lean forward slightly.
2. Gently massage your breast for a few minutes.
3. Place your thumb and index finger an inch away from your nipple in the shape of a C.
4. Press back into your breast. Gently and firmly squeeze together toward nipple, release, and repeat. **Do not** expect to see milk right away.
5. Keeping your fingers in a C shape, rotate your hand around your breast and repeat step 4.
6. If expressing to relieve discomfort or latch problems related to breast fullness, hand express until breast has softened. For milk collection, continue this process for 10 minutes, or until milk flow slows, and use a clean container to collect milk.



Myth Busting

Myth: “Breastfeeding hurts.”

Myth Busted: A little tenderness may occur at first, but breastfeeding should not hurt.

Myth: “If I am sick or on medication I can’t breastfeed.”

Myth Busted: Breastfeeding protects your baby from illness! Many medications do not pass into breast milk. Always check with WIC and your doctor before starting any medication, including birth control.

Myth: “If my baby has jaundice I can’t breastfeed.”

Myth Busted: Babies who get plenty of breast milk get over jaundice faster. Breastfed babies have lots of bowel movements, which help to reduce jaundice.



Myth: “My mom didn’t make enough milk and neither will I.”

Myth Busted: Every woman is different. Most women can make enough milk to feed their babies for a year or more! If you have concerns about your milk supply, ask WIC.

Myth: “I smoke so I can’t breastfeed.”

Myth Busted: Even if you can’t quit, the benefits of breast milk outweigh the effects of smoking. If you want to learn more about protecting your baby from smoke exposure, contact WIC.

Myth: “I can’t breastfeed because I don’t eat well.”

Myth Busted: Your milk will be perfect for your baby, even if your diet isn’t perfect.

Call WIC with your breastfeeding questions.



*“I’m breastfeeding
but I can still enjoy my
favorite foods.”*

—WIC participant



When You Are Away From Your Baby

If you return to work or school, or need to be away, your baby can still have your breast milk. Plan ahead. Talk to WIC a few weeks before you return to work or school about expressing your breast milk or how to get a good quality pump.

- 💧 Only feeding your baby at the breast for the first three to four weeks builds a good milk supply.
- 💧 After three to four weeks, a bottle of breast milk can be given. Practice giving your baby a bottle before you are away from each other.
- 💧 Babies feed easier from a bottle using a nipple with a wide base and slow flow.
- 💧 It is important to always hold your baby when bottle feeding. To make it more like breastfeeding, hold the baby upright and tummy to tummy.
- 💧 When bottle feeding, pause often. Switch arms halfway through the feeding.
- 💧 Babies know when they are full. Do not try to make them finish the bottle.



*Continuing to
breastfeed when
you are with
your baby maintains
your milk supply.*



Troubleshooting

Breastfeeding should be comfortable and enjoyable. Most of the time, breastfeeding issues can be prevented or treated quickly without interrupting breastfeeding.



Sore nipples

Some women have tender nipples in the first few days of nursing. Soreness after the first few days is not normal.

Preventing sore nipples:

- Make sure the baby is latched correctly. Baby should latch with a wide open mouth and should have a deep latch with the nipple and part of the areola in baby's mouth. If the bottom lip is tucked in, pull down on the chin as baby latches.
- If you feel pain, take baby off the breast by putting your finger into the corner of baby's mouth between the gums to break the suction, and try to latch again.
- Nurse your baby frequently at the first sign of hunger.
- Try different breastfeeding positions.

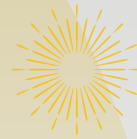


For more about latch, see pages 4 & 5.

Troubleshooting

Treating sore nipples:

- 💧 Keep breastfeeding!
- 💧 Make sure baby latches correctly.
- 💧 Begin feeding on the breast that is less sore and then switch sides.
- 💧 Rub breast milk on your nipple after feeding to help heal.
- 💧 If using nursing pads, change them as soon as they get wet.
- 💧 Call WIC for help or more information.



*“I couldn’t believe how quickly
I felt better after WIC
helped me!”*

—WIC participant

Thrush

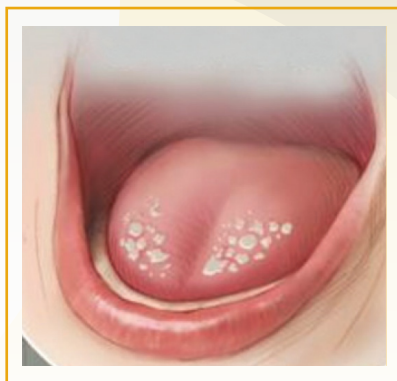
Thrush is a yeast infection on your nipples and in your baby's mouth or diaper area. You are more likely to get thrush if you have recently used antibiotics or have a history of vaginal yeast infections.

Signs of thrush in mom include:

- 🔥 Burning, itching, or sore nipples after a period of pain-free nursing.
- 🔥 Nipples may be red, flaky, shiny, or have tiny bumps.
- 🔥 Stabbing breast pain.

Signs of thrush in baby include:

- 🔥 Baby is fussy, gassy, or goes on and off the breast while nursing.
- 🔥 White patches on tongue, cheeks, or gums that do not wipe off.
- 🔥 Diaper rash that does not heal with regular rash creams.



Source: Mayo Clinic

Troubleshooting

Treating thrush:

- 🔥 Keep breastfeeding!
- 🔥 A doctor will need to treat BOTH you and your baby for thrush, even if only one of you has symptoms.
- 🔥 Make sure you and baby take all of the medicine the doctor gives you, or the thrush may come back.
- 🔥 Wash your hands often, use clean towels, and change your bra and breast pads often. Pacifiers, bottle parts, teething toys, and pump parts need to be boiled during treatment.
- 🔥 Do not freeze breast milk for later use while you and your baby are being treated for thrush.



Engorgement

When your baby is three to five days old, it is normal for your breasts to become more full and heavy. Engorgement is when the breasts are so full that they become hard and painful, and the baby may have trouble latching.

Preventing engorgement:

- 💧 Watch for baby's hunger signs and breastfeed often.
- 💧 Empty one breast at each feeding and change which breast is offered first.
- 💧 Wake baby to breastfeed if sleeping longer than three hours.
- 💧 Make sure baby has a good latch.
- 💧 Avoid pacifiers, bottles, and formula.

Treating engorgement:

- 💧 Keep breastfeeding often!
- 💧 Hand express or use a breast pump to get a little milk out to soften the breast before baby latches.
- 💧 Gently massage your breast – ask your WIC peer helper for massage techniques that will help.
- 💧 Put cool cloths or ice packs on your breasts after feedings to reduce swelling.

Remember, engorgement is only temporary! If your breasts are still too full after one or two days or you are having trouble getting your baby to latch, call WIC or your healthcare provider for help.

False Alarms

The following concerns can create unnecessary worry for breastfeeding moms.

Frequent feeds: Eating often is normal for a newborn. Babies have growth spurts at around 10 days, three weeks, six weeks, and three months of age when they might breastfeed more often.

Baby takes a bottle after breastfeeding: Bottles flow fast and babies have an instinct to keep swallowing so they don't choke. This does not mean they are still hungry or didn't get enough at the breast. Giving your baby a bottle may decrease your milk supply, or cause your baby to eat too much.

Breast changes: Your breasts will go through many changes as they adjust to nursing. They will be soft right after delivery, become full about two to five days later, and become softer again around 10 days after birth. These changes do not mean you are losing your milk supply.

Difficulty with pumping milk: Pumping is a skill that comes with practice. Often, moms get less milk out with a breast pump than when the baby actually nurses. Call WIC if you think you may be having issues with your breast pump.

Baby is fussy: All babies have fussy times, some more than others. Your baby may want to nurse for reasons other than hunger, such as being thirsty, tired, or need comforting.

Having a new baby is a big change for everyone involved! Try to stay relaxed and enjoy this time with your baby!



Breastfeeding Log and Diaper Diary

Count each breastfeed and diaper change. Circle the hour closest to when your baby starts each feeding. Circle W when your baby has a wet diaper and D when your baby has a dirty diaper. It is ok if your baby has more wet or dirty diapers than shown below.

Day 1: Colostrum

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W** Dirty Diapers: black sticky stool **D**

Day 2: A little more Colostrum

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W** Dirty Diapers: black/brown sticky stool **D D**

Day 3: Breasts are starting to feel heavier. Feed often to prevent engorgement.

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W W** Dirty Diapers: stools are turning to green **D D D**

Day 4: More milk is on the way — keep up the good work!

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W W W** Dirty Diapers: stools are turning to yellow **D D D D**

Day 5: You will hear more swallowing from your baby.

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W W W W** Dirty Diapers: yellow stools **D D D D**

Day 6: You are doing a great job!

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W W W W W** Dirty Diapers: yellow stools **D D D D**

Day 7: Congratulations on breastfeeding your baby the first week!

Feeding Times: Midnight 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Noon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Wet Diapers **W W W W W W W** Dirty Diapers: yellow stools **D D D D**

See page 9 for more information about diapers. Call WIC or your doctor if you have any concerns.

How Long Should I Nurse My Baby?

Breastfeeding is the best nutrition for your baby. Nursing for even a day is the most precious gift you can give to your newborn.

If you nurse for the first few days your baby will receive your colostrum. This feeds him perfectly and helps him to have a healthy digestive system. Nursing is a great way to get to know your baby.

If you nurse for four to six weeks you will help your baby to stay healthy. Breastfed newborns are sick less often.

If you nurse for three or four months you will help avoid allergies. You and your baby will have a special bond.



If you nurse for six to nine months you will reduce the risk of future health issues. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends feeding only breast milk for the first six months of life and continuing to breastfeed along with other foods for the first year and beyond.

If you nurse for a year you have given your baby a healthy start that will last a lifetime. Your child will have a stronger immune system and is less likely to need dental work. You will also have saved thousands of dollars!

If you nurse past a year and until your baby outgrows the need you will know that you have met your baby's needs in the most natural and healthy way possible. Families of nursing toddlers often find that medical bills are lower for years to come!



*Whether you count your time
nursing in days, weeks, months, or years,
the choice to nurse your child
is one that you will never regret.*

Adapted from Diane Wiessinger's handout. Used with permission.

Notes

Please use this page to write down any thoughts or questions you may have.

Breastfeeding is:

Natural *Life Saving* Healthy
Beautiful **Empowering** *Free*

Nourishing

Bonding *Calming*

Not *Always* Easy

But is *always* **WORTH IT!**



For questions, classes, and help with breastfeeding, call:

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