

## **Module 1B- “What about my life?”**

Frequently Asked Questions about Lifestyle and Breastfeeding

**What I learn:** Breastfeeding can work for my life!

### **I will be really busy with work and school. I don’t know how I can breastfeed.**

Response: Breastfeeding is convenient and easier than formula and bottles. Although the idea of breastfeeding might seem overwhelming at first, there is a lot of flexibility. Any amount of breast milk you can give your baby is a good thing. You can breastfeed in person whenever you and the baby are together. You can either pump or express milk for when you are not there, but you don’t have to: if it is less than 4 hours, you can breastfeed before and after you get home. Read more about all of this below.

### **How can you say breastfeeding is easy when the first 2 weeks are so hard?**

Response: Once you get through the first few days to weeks, breastfeeding is so easy it’s crazy. No bottles, no formula cans, no latex nipples, less to carry, nothing to buy.

### **I can’t run around with a breast pump- what do you suggest?**

Response: You can express milk at home and leave the milk with your childcare provider. Also, if your childcare provider can bring you the baby during the day or if you can drop into the day care, you can breastfeed during the day. Research shows that this helps women continue breastfeeding while working and going to school.

**Do I need a breast pump?** Response: No. You don’t need a breast pump. Many women don’t express milk at all and breastfeed at the breast only, and some women hand express their milk instead of using a pump. If you can do a breast self exam, it will be easy to get comfortable expressing your own milk. Your breasts are yours- hand expressing is easy: <https://globalhealthmedia.org/videos/how-to-express-breastmilk/> . If you get a pump through insurance, don’t give it away – they cover just one per 5 years.

**If I want the baby to take bottles and formula in addition to breastfeeding and my breast milk, when do I start?** Response: Good question. Wait till 2-3 weeks of age to offer a bottle – this way your breast milk supply will not be at risk. Also, the baby will get really good at breastfeeding before the bottle enters the picture. Offer the bottle once per day from 2-3 weeks on to keep your baby in practice. Babies can have both breast milk and formula at one feeding, and any formula brand is fine.

**I heard you have to let the father or grandmother or someone else offer the bottle or the baby will refuse it.** Response: That is not true. You can do it- again just wait for 2-3 weeks so your milk supply is protected.

**What if the baby refuses a bottle?** Response: Usually that is not a problem if you start one a day by 3 weeks. Older infants who can sit up (4-5+ months old) can use a sippy cup or open cup for breast milk. Younger infant can be fed with a syringe.

**Don't breastfeeding babies get up a lot more often in the night? I need sleep!**

Response: Breastfeeding babies don't get up more at night than formula babies, it's just easier to feed them. Someone can bring you the baby, and there are no bottles or mixing or heating- everything is ready to go when you are breastfeeding. Always practice safe sleep- baby on his or her back in a safe place- you can use a bassinette or Pac N Play or a dresser drawer on the floor right next to your bed - just breastfeed and put the baby back.

**Won't I miss out on the WIC benefits if I breastfeed?**

Response: Not true. You will get an expanded breastfeeding mother food packet from WIC for yourself since you are making the milk for the baby.

**Why do you say breastfeeding costs less than formula when formula is free at WIC?**

Response: WIC only gives you a certain amount of formula each month- it is not meant to be all the formula the baby needs! As the baby grows you may need to buy formula, because you will need more than you are given. Formula cost \$\$\$ . Breast milk is free.

**If I breastfeed does this mean I can't ever go out drinking?** Response: You can have a night out. But you should not feed the baby when you are drunk or buzzed, and we don't encourage you to drink daily. You can pump before having a drink and give that milk to the baby till your buzz is gone. If you are buzzed (or drunk) MAKE SURE YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO CARE FOR THE BABY- the milk is not the biggest worry. One drink takes about 2 hours to leave your system and then your breastmilk is good to go.

**What about the medicines I take for my blood pressure (or for depression)?**

Response: Not all medicines are OK for breastfeeding, but there is at least one or more that are fine with breastfeeding for almost all health conditions. Ask your doctor to check on the internet for "ToxNet" and Lactmed (National Library of Medicine site - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/> ) or Thomas Hale's site.

**My baby's father does not want me to breastfeed because it will mess up our relationship.** Response: Stop right there. Your breasts are yours. You can define the relationship with dad. Why wouldn't he want his baby to be smarter, faster and bigger than every other baby? Does he know that Michael Jordan was breastfed for 3 years?

**The baby's father feels he will be left out if I breastfeed- what can he do?**

Response: Lots. And not just diaper changing. See another module- he can bathe the baby, hold the baby skin-to-skin on his chest, carry the baby around and talk to the baby. He can bring the baby to you to breastfeed, help with breastfeeding, and burp the baby. No father is left out – breastfeeding increases the closeness of the family.

**Doesn't breastfeeding tie you down?** Response: No, the baby ties you down. 😊

**Will breastfeeding make me tired?** Response: Honestly yes you will be tired. But the hormones of breastfeeding give you good feelings and bonding and closeness that you miss with formula feeding. Sleep when the baby sleeps if you can. Get help with your other kids and cooking if possible.