



Breastfeeding: Keys to Getting Started

Almost all moms can meet their breastfeeding goals when given the right information and support. Here is what the latest research and experience show to be the very best ways to get started off right and increase chances of success.

Feed early!

- * If possible, do skin to skin contact after delivery and often during the first few hours
- * Try to breastfeed during the first 1-2 hours of life

Feed often!

- * Try to feed **every 1-3 hours** BUT may only eat every 4-5 hours the first day (that's okay!)
- * Feed when your baby shows signs, and try to wake to feed every few hours.
- * Try to feed **7-10 times a day** BUT may only eat 3-4 times the first day (that's okay!)
- * Your baby's stomach is **small!**, only **1/2 to 1 tsp** big! Feedings are tiny; you may not even notice anything!
- * **Colostrum** is all most babies need

Engage or express

- * **Hand express** (or pump) your colostrum every 2-3 hours if your baby does not nurse
- * You can feed it to your baby with spoon or syringe (but you don't have to feed it every time)
- * Get the milk out!

Expect the expected

- * Most moms do not have milk until about day 4, especially if this is your first baby, and this is fine for most babies.
- * Babies are supposed to lose weight for the first 3-4 days, up to about 10% of birthweight is normal
- * They are not back to birthweight until 10-14 days old, sometimes longer for breastfed babies born by C-section

BREASTFEEDING POSITIONS



CRADLE POSITION



CROSS-CRADLE POSITIONS



FOOTBALL HOLD



LAI D BACK POSITIONS



SIDE LYING

Learn the Latch

1. Be sure you are comfortable and not leaning forward. Bring the baby to you, not you to the baby.
2. Be sure your baby's chest is facing your chest, not the ceiling.
3. Use a position where the baby's head is in your hand (cross cradle or football hold) until you and the baby have gotten into a groove. You can also use laid-back or lying down positions.
4. Use your free hand to support and shape your breast.
5. Stimulate the baby to open her mouth.
6. Bring her head and mouth to your nipple, chin first then mouth.
7. The lips should be flared out and resting on your areola and the whole nipple in the mouth. The nipple should be pointed towards the roof of the mouth.
8. The chin should rest on your breast more than the nose.
9. You should not have pain after 10-15 seconds (unless you have nipple damage already). If you do, take the baby off and reposition.

Supplement safely

- * If your baby needs supplements, use a syringe, spoon, or medicine cup, not a bottle
- * Avoid bottles for the first 2-3 weeks if possible

Do I have enough milk?

YES! You only make 1-3 teaspoons of colostrum every few hours! And that is ENOUGH and NORMAL! That is ALL YOUR BABY NEEDS! Your milk will not fully come in until day 3-4. Unless you have a medical problem, you should make all your baby needs the first few days! You've got this!

My baby is sleepy and not interested/won't latch/won't feed.

NORMAL! Babies are sleepy the first day or two and may only nurse every 5-6 hours. They may be hard to wake up, or wake up and not interested, or suck 3 times and fall back asleep. ALL NORMAL!

My baby wants to eat every 30 minutes!

NORMAL! This is called cluster feeding and is a normal pattern in newborns. They may eat every 30 minutes to an hour, then not again for 5-6 hours. It does not mean that you do not have enough milk. It is just a normal feeding pattern.

My baby can't latch

May be normal. If the baby is not interested in latching, that is probably just due to being sleepy. If your baby is trying to latch but is having difficulty starting or staying on, then this is a latch problem that you want to get fixed right away, either with help in the hospital or seeing a lactation consultant if you have already gone home.

Ouch! The latch hurts.

This may or may not be normal. It normally hurts or is uncomfortable the first 10-15 seconds but it should not hurt after that. If it hurts longer or is very painful, you definitely want to get that fixed in the hospital or see a lactation consultant if you have already gone home.

My baby is losing weight!

NORMAL! GOOD! HEALTHY! This is supposed to happen; it would be unhealthy for your baby not to lose weight. They are born with extra water in their bodies and lose weight the first few days. They should start gaining weight around day 3-5 and be back to birthweight around 10-14 days old.

Normal feeding patterns

- Babies often do not nurse very much the first day; express your colostrum when they don't nurse.
- They often cluster feed, feeding every 30-60 minutes for several feedings then sleep for 3-4 hours.
- Try to feed every 2-3 hours on average after day 1.

Best ways to ensure a good milk supply

- Do skin to skin after delivery
- Breastfeed during the first few hours
- Nurse or express each breast every 2-3 hours until your milk comes in
- Try to nurse both sides each time
- Avoid bottles until 2-3 weeks old
- Be sure latch is not painful, get help right away if it is
- Get help if you have questions or problems!

Watch the baby, not the clock!

- Feed your baby when she shows signs of hunger
- Crying is a late sign of hunger!
- Feeding cues include putting her hands in her mouth, sucking on hands, rooting
- May also include being awake and alert or stretching

All first-time breastfeeding moms and those at high risk should see a lactation consultant 1-3 days after discharge. Call us if you need help! 770.389.4543 | EaglesLanding-Breastfeeding.com © Covenant Care Pediatrics

