

# Breastfeeding: Questions & Answers!

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I BREASTFEED?

- Watch your baby's hunger cues. Expect:

Birth—3 months	8-12 daily feedings
4-6 months	7-9 daily feedings
6-8 months	At least 6 daily feedings
8-10 months	4 daily feedings
10-12 months	2-4 daily feedings

## HOW LONG SHOULD FEEDINGS BE?

- There is no set time.
- May be 15-20 minutes per breast or longer.
- Your baby will let you know when he or she is finished.
- If you are worried that your baby isn't getting enough, talk with your doctor or a WIC peer counselor.

## DOES BREASTFEEDING HURT?

Your breasts may be tender at first until you and your baby are comfortable with breastfeeding and are able to find a position that works for you. If breastfeeding is painful, the baby may be sucking on the nipple. This can cause tissue damage over time resulting in cracked or bleeding nipples. If breastfeeding is painful, try these steps:

- **Re-latch:** Put your finger inside baby's mouth to break the suction. Then latch the baby to the breast again.
- **Look at your Nipple:** Your nipple should not look flat or compressed when it comes out of your baby's mouth. It should be the same shape as it was prior to breastfeeding or a little longer.
- **Watch Milk Transfer:** If your baby is latched correctly, he or she will suck several times and then swallow. If no milk is being transferred, your baby will suck without swallowing.
- **Call Your Peer Counselor:** Your peer counselors have been trained to help you with breastfeeding. Call or text your peer counselors when you have concerns or questions.

## HUNGER CUES:

- Puts hands or fists in mouth
- Sucking motions with mouth
- Rooting (moving head while searching for the breast)
- Eye movements under eyelids
- Restless body movements while sleeping
- Crying may be a late sign of hunger. It may be difficult to latch when he/she is upset. Start breastfeeding as soon as you see hunger signals.



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## IS MY BABY GETTING ENOUGH?

Signs that your baby is getting enough milk:

- Weight gain is the best way to tell if your baby is getting enough to eat. Call your doctor or your WIC peer counselor if you are worried that your baby isn't eating enough.
- Your baby is having plenty of wet and poopy diapers.
- He/she seems satisfied and content after feedings.
- If your baby is falling asleep at the breast during most feedings, place your baby skin to skin, and talk to him in a calming voice. When he begins to move or open his eyes, move him to the breast to feed. It may take 10-15 minutes to wake a sleepy baby.

## SIGNS OF FULLNESS:

- Stops sucking
- Lets go of the nipple
- Turns head away
- Baby's body is soft and relaxed
- Hands are relaxed

## WHAT IF I DON'T PRODUCE ENOUGH MILK?

- Breastfeed more frequently to increase milk supply.
- Call your peer counselor to help with latch.
- Try to avoid formula. It often decreases milk supply. Place your baby's crib or bassinet in your room so that it is easy to breastfeed at night.
- Pump. Ask your local WIC Clinic for a pump, and pump any time your baby misses a feeding.
- Wake your baby if he/she sleeps more than 4 hours in the early weeks after birth. Try placing your baby skin to skin.
- Eat a variety of foods. There is no one food or drink that will increase your breastmilk production, but eating regularly will help you feel well so you can better care for your baby!



Artificial nipples, including pacifiers, can cause nipple confusion making it harder to get a good latch. Try to wait a month before introducing these!

## Growth Spurts:

Your baby may want to nurse longer or more frequently when he/she is going through a growth spurt. Watch hunger cues and feed your baby when he/she shows signs of hunger. Typical growth spurts occur at 2, 3, and 6 weeks as well as at 3 months.

## DOES MY BABY NEED ANYTHING OTHER THAN BREAST MILK?

- All infants and children need at least 400 International Units (IU) of Vitamin D each day. This includes breastfed infants. Talk to your doctor about Vitamin D supplementation.
- Breast milk has all the calories your baby needs. Formula can cause your baby to not want as much breast milk. It can also decrease milk supply. Talk with your doctor if you are unsure if your baby is eating enough.
- Breastfed babies do not need water, any baby foods, or table foods until they are 6 months. Exclusively breastfeeding during the first 6 months will help to give your baby the nutrients he/she needs.