

Breastfeeding Basics



Breastfeeding can be tough, but we are here to help! The first days to weeks may require a lot of practice and work, but these days are essential for laying the foundation for a successful and enjoyable breastfeeding relationship with your infant.

Latch

Having a proper latch allows your baby to extract milk successfully. If the latch is too shallow, it can result in nipple pain, ineffective milk removal, and ultimately a lower milk supply.

Supply

Removal of milk from the breasts is essential for your body to produce more milk. If the breasts are full, and milk is not removed, your body will decrease the production of milk. In the beginning, removing colostrum or milk 8-12 times a day (every 2-3 hours) tells your body to produce the amount of milk needed for your baby. While your baby is learning to latch, or if your baby is having difficulty breastfeeding, hand expressing or pumping may be necessary to establish a supply.

Length of Feeds

There is not a certain amount of time your baby should feed at each breast. A baby who is at the breast for a long time may not be effectively removing milk. It is important to watch and listen for swallowing of milk, sufficient urine and stool output, and a content baby after feeds.

Engorgement

The breasts can feel full, tender, and warm in the first few days of milk production (usually days 3-5 after birth). The symptoms usually last about 1-2 days. Cool compresses, very gentle massage, and nursing frequently can help. Never massage your breasts deeply, as this will increase inflammation (see video link).

Supplementation

If your baby requires supplementation of pumped breastmilk, donor milk, or formula, it is important to use the “paced bottle-feeding” technique and a slow-flow nipple. Fast and easy flow from a bottle can lead to frustration at the breast. Pacing the feed mimics the experience of feeding at the breast.



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“Triple feeding”

At times, “triple feeding” may be recommended for a *brief* time while your baby is learning how to breastfeed. This means the baby nurses at the breast first, followed by pumping the remaining milk from the breast, and bottle feeding the baby after nursing. This allows the baby to practice nursing, while still getting enough calories from supplementation. Ideally, this is more efficient if a different person feeds the bottle *while* you pump.

These video links can help you learn more about the topics mentioned above.

<https://firstdroplets.com/downloads>

- Hand expression,
- Attachment,
- Electric pump
- Hands-on Pumping

<https://bfmedneo.com/All-Resources/Videos>

- Gentle Breast Massage
- latch
- Hand expression

<https://globalhealthmedia.org/language/english/> >

- Filter “breastfeeding”

<https://lacted.org/videos/>

- Paced bottle feeding (English and Spanish)
- Manual expression
- Flat nipples
- Sandwich hold and asymmetric latch
- Fitting pump flanges

