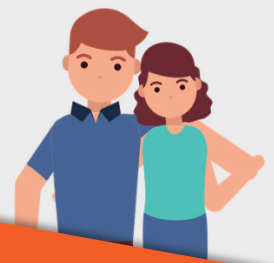


Father/Partner Support and Lactation



After delivery, breastfeeding or lactating parents need support. A supportive father or partner is an essential part of lactation success. Partners can impact a lactating parent's choice to lactate and for how long. Partner support can lower the risk of postpartum anxiety and depression. A partner who can support lactation can be a father, co-mother, co-parent, grandparent or other relative, close friend, or anyone else the lactating parents identify as their partner.

Ways partners can help:

- Encourage your partner with positive words. Let them know what a great job they're doing. Acknowledge how this can be challenging and that you are there for them.
- Learn about lactation. Engage in conversations about lactation supporting your partner and normalizing it in your family and society.
- Your partner is like an exotic plant. Water, feed, and nurture your partner. Make nutritious foods and snacks.
- Remember all the other chores that need to get done. Step up and just do them! Cooking meals, cleaning the house, doing the laundry, caring for other children if you have them.
- Bond with the baby with skin-to-skin, diaper changes, giving the baby a bath, and tummy time.
- Help create and find lactating-friendly areas in your home and when out with a comfortable spot to feed.
- Assist with positioning, you can see things from a different angle than the feeding parent.
- If your partner is having difficulties, arrange for help. Talk it through and then make that call to schedule a visit with a lactation specialist.
- If your partner is experiencing feelings of anger or irritability, appetite, and sleep disturbance, crying and sadness, feelings of guilt, lack of interest in the baby, loss of pleasure in things they used to enjoy, constant worry, feeling that something bad is going to happen, or thoughts of harming the baby or themselves, help them to speak with their healthcare provider or schedule an appointment. Postpartum Support International, postpartum.net, has helpful information and a helpline at 1-800-944-4773.
- Help you and your partner to take breaks, take turns going for a walk, take a shower, and remember to take a step back and look at what a wonderful job you both are doing!

