

Nutrition On Your Own



How to Breastfeed Your Newborn

Two things make all the difference in making breastfeeding comfortable and pleasurable for you and your baby: positioning and latch-on.

Positioning

If you are pregnant use a doll to practice placing your baby in the correct nursing position.

If you are ready to nurse your newborn, try to relax first. Get comfortable! Maybe you will want to place a pillow under the arm that is holding your baby. Do not wait for your baby to cry before putting her to the breast. Look for her early hunger cues. Your baby is telling you she is hungry when she:



- turns her head from side to side. Your baby is looking for your breast to nurse.
- sucks on her fist or makes sucking noises, or licks her lips.

Position Your Baby At Your Breast

1. Hold your baby with her tummy facing toward your tummy. Your nipple needs to be right at your baby's mouth.
2. Cup your hand like a "C" and support your breast in the palm of your hand. Place your thumb lightly above the nipple. Be sure and keep your hand behind the darker skin around your nipple.

3. Keep your baby supported the entire time you are nursing. You may continue supporting your breast throughout the feeding, too, if you wish.
4. When you correctly position your baby, you can look down and see her ear, shoulder and body in a straight line. They should face you, tummy to tummy.



Your newborn may want to nuzzle and cuddle up to you the first couple of times you try to breastfeed. That's ok! You are off to a good start.

Now you are ready to have your baby "latch on."

Latch-on

1. Lightly touch your baby's lower lip with your nipple. After a few tries, your baby will open her mouth wide, as if to yawn.
2. Quickly center your nipple in your baby's mouth and pull your baby in very close to your body.
3. Make sure about 1 inch of the dark area around the nipple is in her mouth.
4. Check to see that her lips are curled out. If they are sucked in, gently pull them out by placing your finger gently below each lip and lifting them with your finger.
5. Her nose should touch your breast.



Breastfeeding should not hurt!

If it hurts when your baby nurses, take her off the breast gently. Put your finger in the corner of her mouth or gently press your breast, and remove her from your breast. When your breast slips from her mouth, start again with Step 1.



Let your nipples air dry after each feeding. You only need to wash them when you shower and just let the warm water run over them. Don't use soap. This will keep your nipples from becoming dry or cracked.

Make sure your baby is properly positioned and latched on during each feeding.

Look and Listen!

“Is my baby getting enough to eat?” Look and listen during each feeding to find out if your baby is getting milk.

- Are your baby's ears wiggling?
- Do you hear soft, “gulping” noises? Or a quiet sighing sound? This is your baby swallowing.

Let your baby nurse as long as she wants. When she has had enough milk, she will “fall off” the breast. She will be very relaxed and content. Burp your baby and put her on the other breast.

“Do I make enough milk for my baby?” There are signs to look for.

- As you nurse your baby on one breast, does the other breast leak drops of milk?
- Do your breasts feel full before a feeding?
- Does your baby have 4-6 wet diapers each day?
- Does your baby have 2-3 poopy diapers each day?
- Is your baby gaining weight?

These are signs your body is producing milk for your baby: the healthiest, most nutritious, and only natural food your baby could ever have.

Congratulations for giving your baby the healthiest start in life!

What Have You Learned?

1. What is the most important thing you learned from this lesson?

2. Name 3 things to look for when positioning your baby correctly at your breast.

3. Name 3 things you can do to get your baby to latch on well to your breast.

4. Name 3 ways you can tell if your baby is getting milk.

5. Name 2 ways to tell if you are producing milk for your baby.

Happy nursing!

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