

Breast feeding tips

Remember, breast feeding is new to your baby and it may be new to you too so it's possible you may encounter some difficulties. Here are some tips that may help to make your breast feeding experience easier.

Engorged breasts?

If your breasts feel swollen and tender and your baby is having difficulty latching on you could try the following before feeds:

- Apply warm moist compress to breasts
- Massage breasts in circles with fingertips
- Nurse your baby every 2 hours

If you still feel uncomfortable after feeds you could also try to:

- Hand express or pump surplus milk
- Apply a cold compress to the breasts

Not enough milk?

It can sometimes take a little while for your breast milk to keep up with baby's demands - don't panic - continue to feed on demand and remember to use alternate breasts at each feed (put a safety pin in your bra strap so you don't forget which breast to start with.)



More breast feeding tips

Baby 'refused' the breast

Babies may refuse the breast if they're not hungry but they also may appear to refuse the breast after they have been offered bottles, or even soothers. This is because the shape of the artificial nipple is different from your nipple and the baby gets confused. Avoid introducing bottles and soothers before 6 months.

Sore or cracked nipples

If your nipples get sore or cracked, it's usually for one of the following reasons:

- The baby is not in the right position
- The baby is latched onto the nipple instead of the areola
- The baby is not released from the breast properly after the feed (if you pull too hard it will hurt you)

Talk to a nurse at the polyclinic or join the breast feeding support group if there is one. Don't give up, it will get better.

Coping with tiredness

- Take naps when your baby is sleeping - don't be tempted to catch up on housework
- Accept help in the home with cooking or cleaning - or let things 'slide' a bit

Storing expressed breast milk

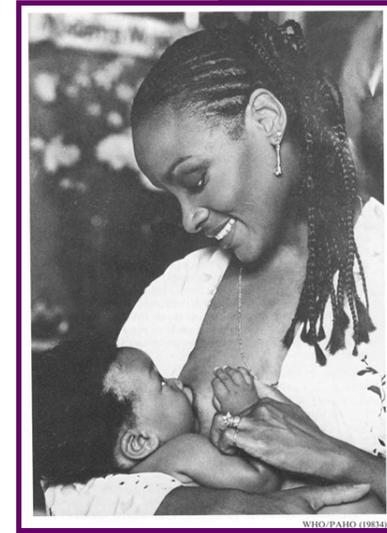
Wash hands before expressing milk into clean screw top containers. Milk can be stored for:

- 6-8 hours at room temperature,
- 24 hours in an insulated cooler bag,
- 5 days in the refrigerator,
- 3-6 months in a freezer with its own door.

Information sources: WHO and UNICEF

NATIONAL NUTRITION CENTRE 2017

Mother & Child Nutrition Series



Birth - 6 Months: Exclusive Breastfeeding

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Birth - 6 Months: Exclusive Breastfeeding

Exclusive breastfeeding

Exclusive breastfeeding means that your baby gets nothing but your breast milk from birth to 6 months - no glucose water, no barley water, no "cooling tea", no cereal, no pumpkin or potato, not even water.

If you introduce other foods before 6 months your baby may be more at risk for nutritional problems, allergies, and even asthma.



Colostrum:

In the first 3-4 days before your milk comes in the breasts produce Colostrum. Colostrum is different from milk and has some special properties.

- It is higher in protein and other nutrients than breast milk.
- It protects your baby from viruses and infections.
- It is a natural laxative and reduces the risk of your baby getting jaundice.
- It helps prevent your baby developing allergies.

Why exclusive breastfeeding is best for your baby:

- Natural protection means less colds, ear infections and "gastro" (vomiting and diarrhea).
- Breast milk is easy to digest so less chance of tummy upsets (and diapers aren't as 'stinky').
- Breast fed babies don't get constipation.
- Breast fed babies are less likely to become obese or develop diabetes.
- Breast milk offers protection against certain types of cancer.
- Breast fed babies have a higher IQ.

Why exclusive breastfeeding benefits you:

- Bleeding stops sooner.
- Uterus shrinks faster (so your tummy goes down faster too).
- Breast feeding burns 500 calories daily so could help you lose that "baby weight".
- It's convenient - especially at night, and it's economical - no bottles and formula to buy.
- It reduces your risk of developing diabetes, and protects you against breast and ovarian cancer.



Breast feeding on demand



Breast feeding on demand means:

- Feeding whenever your baby wants to
- Continuing each feed until your baby is satisfied

Why is it recommended?

- The more your baby nurses, the more milk is produced
- Babies are calmer and latch on better

How often do babies feed?

- Every 2-3 hours in the first few weeks
- Every 3-5 hours for older babies and longer at night

Breast feeding on demand - you can make it work and you'll be glad that you did