

Guide for Breastfeeding



Why is breastfeeding so good for my baby?

Human milk not only provides all the protein, sugar, fat, and vitamins your baby needs, but it also has special benefits that formulas cannot match. It helps protect your baby against certain diseases and infections. Because of the protective substances in human milk, breastfed children are less likely to have the following:

- Ear infections
- Allergies
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pneumonia, wheezing, and bronchiolitis
- Meningitis

Research also suggests that breastfeeding may help to protect against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Other reasons why human milk is good for your child include the following:



- It is easier for babies to digest.
- It does not need to be prepared.
- It costs nothing to make and is always in supply.
- It is even good for the environment since there are no bottles, cans, and boxes to put in the garbage.
- Breastfeeding also provides physical contact, warmth, and closeness, which help to create a special bond between a mother and her baby.

Why is breastfeeding so good for the mother?

- ◆ Helps the uterus return to its regular size more quickly. Reduces postpartum bleeding.
- ◆ Burns more calories and helps you get back to your prepregnancy weight more quickly.
- ◆ Reduces the risk of ovarian cancer and, in premenopausal women, breast cancer.
- ◆ Builds bone strength to protect against bone fractures in older age.
- ◆ Delays the return of your menstrual period, which may help extend the time between pregnancies. (Keep in mind that breastfeeding alone will not prevent pregnancy.)

How does my body prepare for breastfeeding?

- ◆ When you become pregnant, your body naturally starts to prepare for breastfeeding.
- ◆ During the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy, your body is capable of producing milk. This first milk, called colostrum, is packed with all the nutrients that your newborn baby needs. It also contains many substances to protect new babies against infections. Colostrum is thick and yellowish or orangish in color.
- ◆ Several days after delivery, the breast will produce mature breast milk. The milk becomes more watery and milk-like in color.
- ◆ One of the special qualities of human milk is that it changes during the time you nurse your baby to match the changing needs of your growing infant.



Do I have to do anything to prepare my breasts for Breast feeding?

- ◆ During pregnancy, you do not have to care for your nipples or breasts in any special way. Just make sure your bras provide enough support. Since your breasts will get larger, buy nursing bras that allow room for growth.
- ◆ Wash your breasts with warm water only. Soaps, lotions, and alcohol are not necessary, may be irritating, and should not be used.
- ◆ Ask your obstetrician or family physician to examine your breasts and nipples during pregnancy.

When should I start breastfeeding?



- ◆ It's best to start breastfeeding as soon as possible. Your baby's first feeding can take place within 30 minutes to an hour after delivery.
- ◆ The protection against infection that human milk provides is important immediately after birth.
- ◆ Your milk will also give the baby nutrients to prevent a low blood sugar level.
- ◆ This early taste of your milk also stimulates the baby to nurse better later.

How do I take care of my breasts during breastfeeding?

- ◆ By the third or fourth day of breastfeeding, your milk will change from colostrum to what looks more like skim milk.
- ◆ Your breasts will also go from feeling soft to firm.
- ◆ If your nipples leak, use a nursing pad or clean folded handkerchief squares inside your bra to catch the leaking milk. Be sure to change these often.
- ◆ Do not use plastic-lined pads because they will prevent air from circulating around your nipples.
- ◆ Between feedings, gently pat your nipples dry. This helps prevent them from getting irritated.

How often should I nurse?

- ◆ Breastfed babies tend to feed more often than formula-fed babies, usually 8 to 12 times a day. The main reason for this is that their stomachs empty much more quickly because human milk is so easy to digest.
- ◆ Initially, your newborn will probably nurse every couple of hours, regardless of whether it's day or night. By the end of the first month, your baby may start sleeping longer at night. Let your baby feed on demand-that is whenever he/she is hungry.
- ◆ If Your baby is hungry, he or she may do any of the following:
 - ▶ Nuzzle against your breast.
 - ▶ Show the rooting reflex.
 - ▶ Make sucking motions or put hand to mouth.
 - ▶ Cry.

How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?

- ◆ Has at least six wet diapers per day.
- ◆ Pale yellow urine (not dark yellow or orange).
- ◆ The urine should be clear, not dark.
- ◆ Two to five loose yellow stools per day.
- ◆ Steady weight gain, after the first week of age.
- ◆ Sleeping well.
- ◆ Baby looks alert and healthy when awake.

I already have sore nipples, what else can I do to feel better?



- ◆ Vary nursing positions.
- ◆ Short and frequent feedings.
- ◆ Nurse on the least sore breast first.
- ◆ Massage expressed milk into nipple and areola.
- ◆ Soap and alcohol should be avoided.
- ◆ Wear nursing bras and pads without plastic liners. Change the pads frequently to keep the nipples dry.
- ◆ Bathing your nipples in saline solution three times a day may help. (saline solution is made by mixing ½ teaspoon of salt with 8 ounces of warm water.)
- ◆ You can also wear breast shells in your bra which prevents rubbing and irritation against your nipples.

What is engorgement and how can I avoid it?

- ◆ When milk builds up in your breasts, and is not adequately released by your baby's sucking, your breasts may become hard and painful. This is engorgement, Like sore nipples engorgement is preventable.
- ◆ Frequent breastfeeding is the best way to prevent or alleviate engorgement.
- ◆ Make sure your baby is latching on correctly and do not limit the amount of time the baby breastfeeds at each feeding.
- ◆ Also, do not offer bottles, formula, water bottles or pacifiers to your baby. Do not skip any feedings.
- ◆ If your baby can't latch-on, take a warm shower or apply hot, moist towels to your breast for 2-4 minutes, prior to breastfeeding.
- ◆ Massage your breast gently prior to and during breastfeeding.
- ◆ If your baby can't latch-on or nipple is flattened, use a hospital type electric breast pump or hand expression to soften areola, stimulate milk flow and help with nipple protrusion.

What should I eat while I am breastfeeding?



- ◆ In general, nursing mothers should maintain a healthy, balanced, and nutrient-rich diet.
- ◆ A regular source of vitamin B12 (green leafy vegetables)
- ◆ Calcium (dairy products) and vitamin D (dairy products) are encouraged.
- ◆ Drink at least 8 glasses of water per day (including milk).

Do I need to be careful about medication?

- ◆ Most medications are safe to take during breastfeeding, but there are a few that can be dangerous for the baby. To be sure, let your doctor and your baby's pediatrician know that you are breastfeeding.
- ◆ Get approval for all medications, including nonprescriptive drugs. Most Chinese herbal medications are contraindication.
- ◆ Also, take medication just after you nurse rather than just before.
- ◆ Some birth control pills also might affect your milk production, so discuss this with your doctor.

Should I stop breastfeeding if I get sick?

- ◆ Breastfeeding should and must continue even when the mother is sick. This is beneficial to both the mother and the baby.
- ◆ The mother has already been breastfeeding. By the time the mother's symptoms show, the baby has already been infected. Therefore, the best thing to do is to continue breastfeeding because the breast milk contains the antibodies that will help the baby's immune system fight the illness.
- ◆ Terminating breastfeeding will actually decrease the baby's immune capabilities and increase the chances of the baby getting sick.
- ◆ If the mother is really sick such as breast abscess, gall bladder surgery, or severe infections, breastfeeding only need to be stopped for a short period.
- ◆ Other infections, such as HIV and TB, can be passed on to the baby and breastfeeding should be avoided in these cases.
- ◆ If the mother has hepatitis B, the baby must be given the hepatitis B vaccine and Hepatitis B Immunoglobulin immediately after birth.

Are there any prohibitions when breastfeeding?



- ◆ Avoid all alcoholic beverages because alcohol can be transmitted through the breast milk. If one must drink alcohol, it is best to drink after breastfeeding.
- ◆ Avoid smoking because second hand smoking is harmful to all children especially to newborns. It increases the frequency of SIDS.
- ◆ Avoid caffeine or at least reduce your intake while you are breastfeeding.



How should I position my self when breastfeeding?

Correct positioning will help prevent nipple soreness.
Below are three common breastfeeding positions.

Cradle Hold

1. Place 1-2 pillows in lap.
2. Place baby's head in crook of mother's arm.
3. Place baby on his/her side. Chest to chest with mother.
4. Support breast with hand in an "L" or "C" position.
5. Tickle baby's lower lip until he opens WIDE! BE PATIENT! Quickly put baby onto breast.
6. Break the baby's suction prior to removing baby from the breast.



Football/Clutch Hold

1. Place 1-2 pillows at mother's side.
2. Baby's neck & lower back of head supported in mother's hand with forearm supporting baby's upper body held against her side.
3. Follow above "Cradle Hold" steps 4-6.

Lying Down position

1. Mother on side with pillows supporting back and top leg that is bent forward.
2. Baby on side parallel to mother's body.
2. Follow above "Cradle Hold" steps 4-6.



What are the benefits for the family?

- ◆ Less inconvenience or stress, and less chance of taking time off to care for a sick child.
- ◆ Less financial burden for families.
- ◆ Long term health benefits for infant and mother.

What are tips for successful breastfeeding?

- ◆ Breastfeed baby immediately after birth.
- ◆ Breastfeed frequently, every 2-3 hours.
- ◆ Allow unlimited nutritive sucking while correctly positioned at breast.
- ◆ No bottles for 3-4 weeks.

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Sources : Women's Health Guide to breastfeeding and internet: Breastfeeding.org.

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