

What to Expect in the First Few Weeks

At 2-4 days your milk will “come in” and it will look more like white milk. Your breasts will feel more full. The fullness will go away after a few days. This is normal. It doesn't mean you are losing your milk. Nurse frequently to keep your breasts from getting uncomfortable.

Mild nipple tenderness is normal in the first week. If breastfeeding is painful, make sure your baby gets a large mouthful of your breast, not just the tip of your nipple. And contact your WIC Breastfeeding counselor for assistance.

No bottles should be given until breastfeeding is going well after about 4 weeks. By only breastfeeding, your body will make the amount of milk your baby needs. That is about 1 ½ to 3 hours. Also, a baby sucks differently on a bottle nipple (and the bottle flows too fast and your baby will often take more than she needs) and may become confused.

After about 4 weeks, and breastfeeding is going well, you can introduce a bottle 1 or 2 times a week. It is best to give your baby your expressed breast milk so your body is still making as much as your baby is taking.

Your breasts may feel less full around 3-4 weeks. They are adjusting to making only the amount your baby needs (and not more). As long as your baby is gaining weight well and is getting enough at breast, this is normal to feel more comfortable and not so full.

Your baby may become fussy during growth spurts at 2 or 3 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months. You will need to breastfeed more often during these times.

Your baby needs only your breast milk for the first 4-6 months.

No water or other food or liquids are needed. Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby.

Breastfeeding: The Early Weeks

The early weeks of breastfeeding are a learning time for both mom and baby. It is very common for women to feel overwhelmed and question whether they are meeting their babies' needs. Be patient with yourself—it takes practice for breastfeeding to go smoothly. The following tips can help.



And we love to help new moms and babies just like you!
Please call, we know you have questions, all moms do.

WIC Breastfeeding Counselor: _____

Phone Number: _____

In The Hospital

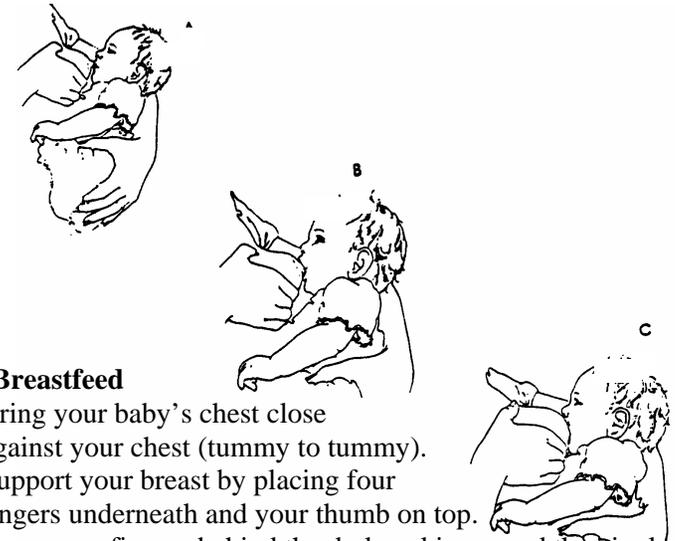
- Let your doctor & hospital staff know you will be breastfeeding because you know it is the best for your baby.
- Ask that your baby room with you so you can watch for hunger signs and then breastfeed. Do not have your baby go to the nursery, even at night. You can watch your baby best and not have him wait to breastfeed.
- Ask that your baby's hospital card & chart state "no bottles, pacifiers are to be given. You are breastfeeding!" It will make it harder for you and your baby when you go home if they do. Sugar water, formula, pacifiers, are not needed.

The First Feeding

- Breastfeed as soon as possible after delivery.
- Ask the nurse or lactation consultant for help getting started and later if needed. Have her watch you breastfeed.
- Your first milk will be thick and yellowish. This milk is called colostrum and comes in small amounts (1-2 teaspoons). **Colostrum protects your baby from illness and is all your baby needs until your milk comes in!** Your milk will come in around 2 to 4 days after delivery. Breastfeeding (colostrum) will help bring your milk in.

How Often and How Long to Nurse

- Newborn babies are hungry often because their stomachs are very small. Signs of hunger include: sucking on hands, rooting (opening mouth wide and searching for milk), or fussing.
- Babies less than one month old will need to feed every 1½ to 3 hours or more (8 to 12 times in 24 hours). You may need to wake a sleepy baby to nurse.
- A feeding will take about 10-15 of active nursing (sucking and swallowing, not sleeping) on each breast. This is a nice time to enjoy, watch, cuddle your baby.



How To Breastfeed

- Bring your baby's chest close against your chest (tummy to tummy).
- Support your breast by placing four fingers underneath and your thumb on top. Keep your fingers behind the darker skin around the nipple.
- Gently tickle your baby's lips with your nipple. Wait until he opens very wide and quickly pull him onto your breast. You need to get as much of your breast in mouth your baby's mouth to nurse on your breast, not just the end of the nipple.
- To remove your baby from the breast, insert your little finger into the side of his mouth to break the suction.
- Always try to nurse from both breasts at a feeding. Start with a different breast at each feeding.
- Burp your baby before nursing on the second breast.

Signs Your Baby is Getting Enough Milk

Your baby should:

- nurse 8 to 12 times in 24 hours
- have rhythmic sucking and swallowing (about 10-15 minutes on each side) when nursing
- nurse about every 1 ½ - 3 hours
- have 6 or more wet diapers per day
- have 4 or more soft, yellow, seedy stools per day. After 6 weeks, breastfed babies usually have larger stools less often.
- be back to birth weight by 2 weeks of age. Baby should gain about 5-7 ounces a week. Weigh baby regularly (at WIC), every couple weeks.

All moms want to know if their baby is getting enough. Please call!