



Common Breastfeeding Questions Answered!



Why Should I Breastfeed?

Breastfeeding has benefits for you and baby!

Here are just a few:

- Builds a special bond between you and baby
- The first breast milk, AKA "colostrum," helps create healthy gut bacteria for baby
- Breast milk is easy to digest and has all the nutrients baby needs
- Breast milk is FREE and baby can breastfeed anywhere you are
- Breastfeeding lowers baby's risk of:
 - Asthma, ear infections, eczema, type 2 diabetes, childhood leukemia, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Breastfeeding lowers your risk of:
 - High blood pressure, certain breast and ovarian cancers, type 2 diabetes

What If My Breasts or Nipples Are Too Small or Too Big?

Breast size:

- Does not affect how much breast milk you will make

Nipple size:

- Does not affect how much breast milk you will make

Babies can breastfeed from almost any breast or nipple, no matter the shape or size!

When Do I Start?

It is recommended to start breastfeeding within one hour of birth.

- "Skin to skin" (bare skin contact between your chest and baby's chest) right away can help get breastfeeding off to a great start!
- Having a birth plan in place and working with a breastfeeding professional, like an Internationally Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) or a Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC), can help make breastfeeding successful.

Does Breastfeeding Hurt?

Breastfeeding should NOT hurt!

- Breastfeeding should be comfortable for you and baby.
- If breastfeeding hurts, there could be issues with baby's latch or position.
 - A lactation professional, like an IBCLC or CLC, can help you with this!
 - Here is information on proper latch and positioning:

<https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/steps-and-signs-good-latch>

How Often Should I Breastfeed?

A newborn baby should feed at least 8 times in 24 hours - this is normal!

(Think: "8 or more in 24!")

- Baby's tummy is small, so they drink small amounts of breast milk often.
- Look for these "feeding cues" to know baby is hungry:
 - Sucking on hands, smacking lips, head turning back and forth, opening and closing mouth, sticking tongue out, and waking up from sleeping

Crying is a late sign of hunger! Trying to breastfeed baby when they are crying can be hard and can make breastfeeding more difficult.

At birth, baby's tummy is about the size of a toy marble, pictured on the right (holds about 1 - 2 teaspoons)



By day 10, baby's tummy is about the size of a ping pong ball, pictured on the left (holds about 1 - 2 ounces)

How Can I Tell Baby is Getting Enough Milk?

- Check baby's diapers!
 - Within 24 hours by day 4 of baby's life, baby should be having 3-4 poopy diapers that look yellow and seedy and at least 6 wet diapers.
- You should hear and see baby swallow when breastfeeding.
- After breastfeeding, baby should appear content with relaxed hands or may even fall asleep.



More Common Breastfeeding Questions Answered!



What If I Don't Make Enough Milk?

Breasts are built to make just enough milk for baby!

- Breast milk works in a "supply and demand" way:
 - The more often you breastfeed, the more milk your breasts will make!
 - Going too long without breastfeeding or pumping could cause your breasts to make less milk. Watch baby's "feeding cues" to help avoid this.

Will Eating or Drinking Certain Things Help Me Make More Milk?

There are no specific foods or drinks that are shown to help increase milk supply.

- The way you make breast milk is to feed baby when baby is hungry!
- Your diet does not affect your milk supply, but eating healthy foods will help give you energy and make you feel good while breastfeeding.

Questions about using cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, or medications while breastfeeding?

- Talk to your doctor or a lactation professional!
- Follow this link for general information:
<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/index.html>.

Do I Have to Use a Pump?

Pumping is not necessary, but it can be helpful for people who:

- Are going back to work
- Want a partner or family and friends to be able to feed baby
- May not want to put baby directly to the breast

If possible, pumping is not recommended until baby is at least 1 month old to help you and baby build an adequate milk supply.

How Do I Include My Partner and My Family?

Some things a partner or family member can do when baby is breastfed:

- Change baby's diapers
- Help around the house, cook meals and prepare snacks
- If pumping, bottle feed baby and help clean pump parts and bottles
- Provide "skin to skin" contact to help calm and build a bond with baby

How Long Do I Breastfeed For? Can I Go Back to Work?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for up to 2 years!

- Using a pump might help you reach this goal, especially if you go back to work.
 - Employers are required to provide break time for an employee to pump any time at work for 1 year after baby is born, and you are entitled to a place to pump at work, other than a bathroom, away from coworkers and the public.
 - Here are resources to use when talking to your employer about pumping:
 - <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pump-at-work>
 - <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/talking-your-employer-about-pumping-work>

Breastfeeding Resources for New Parents

- Contact the IBCLC from the hospital or from the pediatrician office.
- Find a local Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program:
<https://www.signupwic.com/>.
- For more breastfeeding information, use these credible websites:
 - WIC Breastfeeding Support: <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/>
 - La Leche League International: <https://llli.org/>
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/index.htm>
 - Breastfeeding Resources in Spanish: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/spanish/nutricion.html#NaN>
 - United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF): <https://www.unicef.org/topics/breastfeeding>