

BASICS OF BREASTFEEDING

Benefits and information
every new mom should know.



Pocket Pal

ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding is one of the best things you can do for your baby...and it's good for you too!

All new mothers make breast milk. As your baby nurses, more milk is made. If you nurse whenever your baby is hungry, your body will produce all the milk your baby needs. If you have any trouble breastfeeding, don't give up – help is available! See the back for resources.

Many health organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend breastfeeding for at least the baby's first 24 months. They also recommend that infants should not be given any other foods or liquids besides mother's milk for the first six months.

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

Breast milk is designed by you especially for your baby and is always ready. But there are other important reasons to breastfeed.

Babies who are breastfed:

- Have fewer stomach aches because mother's milk is easily digested.
- Don't get sick as much as formula-fed babies because mother's milk has antibodies in it. Antibodies fight off illness.
- Feel more secure and comforted than babies who aren't breastfed.
- Are less likely to become obese and have diabetes later in life.

Mothers who breastfeed are:

- More likely to lose weight after pregnancy.
- At a lower risk of getting type 2 diabetes and breast and ovarian cancer.
- Healthier and miss less work than mothers who don't breastfeed.



CONTACT US

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Adapted from WVBA.
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HOW TO BREASTFEED

There are many nursing positions. The position that is easiest for you and your baby is your best position. Position your baby so you are tummy to tummy and their nose touches your nipple. Pull their bottom in close for a deeper latch. Tickle your baby's upper lip with your nipple to get their mouth wide open. Bring your baby toward the breast so baby's upper lip covers the nipple and the area surrounding the nipple.

Time Spent Breastfeeding

When babies are first born, they may ask to feed every 1 ½ hours or even more. Most babies feed for 15 to 20 minutes per breast, while some take a little longer.



TIPS FOR BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS

- Breastfeed as soon as you can after your baby is born.
- Ask for a lactation consultant's help when you're in the hospital and after you go home if you're struggling or your baby isn't feeding well. WIC has trained lactation counselors who can help you.
- Tell hospital staff not to give your baby a bottle or formula.
- Let your baby stay in your hospital room all day and night so you can feed often.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Very few health conditions make it unsafe to breastfeed. If you have a condition you think may cause a problem, talk to your doctor.
- It's OK to breastfeed while taking many medications, but check with your doctor or lactation consultant first.
- If you're a smoker, quit. If you can't, you can still breastfeed, but smoke far from your baby and wash your hands and change your clothes; smoking leaves chemicals behind on your hands, hair and clothing.
- Talk to your doctor or lactation consultant about alcohol use. It's better to avoid alcohol completely. However, one standard-sized alcoholic beverage on occasion is OK. Wait two hours to breastfeed after a drink.
- It is NOT OK to use illegal drugs while breastfeeding.

WHERE TO GET HELP

If you have questions about breastfeeding, there are several places to go for more information. You can call the National Breastfeeding Helpline at 800-994-9662 or visit these websites:

- www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding
- www.llli.org (*La Leche League*)
- **Call your local WIC office**
- <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/>

THE WIC PROGRAM

The U.S. government's program for women, infants and children (WIC) offers support and educational materials to nursing mothers. Go online to: www.fns.usda.gov/wic

PHONE NUMBERS TO KEEP ON HAND

Pediatrician _____

Lactation Consultant _____

Other _____

