



Getting breastfeeding off to a good start: Helpful tips for the first few weeks

Feed Your Baby Often

Your baby needs to eat 8-10 times in a 24-hour period and not necessarily on a regular schedule. Sometimes your baby might go 2-3 hours in between feeds sometimes it might be less than an hour before she's hungry again. Pay attention to your baby's hunger cues instead of the clock - remember she doesn't know what time it is. If you're unable to feed your baby this often it's important that you still stimulate your breasts by hand expressing or using a breast pump in order to establish and maintain your milk supply.

Skin To Skin

Enjoy placing your baby on your bare chest often in the first couple weeks. This has many benefits for both of you. Your baby will feel safe and secure, her temperature and breathing will be regulated, and your hormone levels will increase which will also increase your milk supply.

Latch Is Important

Try letting your baby lead the latch by reclining yourself back and placing baby skin to skin on your chest. Once she starts to root, or look for your nipple, you may gently guide her in the right direction. To help, place your hand behind your baby's shoulders leaving her head free to move and tip back. Let your baby's arms free to assist in finding the right position. And always make sure your baby's chest and face are touching your body. Once she's latched her mouth should be wide with her head tipped back, most of your areola is in her mouth and her nose off your breast. It's important to have a good latch every time. Some discomfort is normal in the first couple days but it should not be painful. If it is, release the latch by putting your finger between his gums and try again. A painful latch is a perfect reason to call for a consult.

Unlimited Feeds (somewhat)

Let your baby nurse on one side as long as she wants (within reason - over an hour may signal a problem). Once she lets go or slows down you can offer the other side. She may take less on the second side so that is where you'll start the next feeding. A typical, newborn feeding is between 30 - 40 minutes and full of alert sucking and swallowing. She should come off the breast relaxed and content. Other things to watch for are consistent, soiled diapers and continued weight gain. *If you notice feedings taking a really long time and baby's always hungry, call for a consult.

Nipple Care

The most common cause for sore nipples is poor latch. It's really important to practice getting a good latch every time. Breastfeeding doesn't come easy for everyone. It can take many tries and a lot of support before you feel comfortable. For visible sores express some milk to leave on your nipples then cover with soft breast pads. There are many natural nipple creams available. The rule of thumb is that if it's safe to put in your mouth it is most likely safe to put on your nipple. If your nipples are persistently sore no matter how perfect the latch, please call for help right away. It may also be a sign that your baby isn't getting enough milk.

These tips brought to you by [Milk Support](#): *because feeding your baby isn't always as easy as it looks*. For more information or to schedule your personalized, online support visit

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