

# Breastfeeding Basics

Breastfeeding is the most natural way to feed your baby, but learning this new skill can take patience and practice. We're here to help!



## > HOW is breast milk made?

When your baby sucks at the breast, hormones are released. These hormones tell your body to make milk and cause it to "let down" or flow.

- The more often your baby nurses, the more milk you will make.
- Giving formula or going for long gaps of time without breastfeeding can reduce the amount of milk you make.

## > WHEN do I breastfeed?

The BEST way to breastfeed is to put the baby on the breast when his behavior shows that he's hungry.

Some people feed their baby based on the clock—for example, every three hours. *Instead*, watch your baby's behavior to know when to put him to the breast.



### Remember

The act of breastfeeding and removing milk from the breast creates more milk. The more often you nurse, the more milk you will make.

## > HOW do I know my baby is hungry?

Hungry babies will do many **behaviors before they cry**. Feed your baby *before* she begins to cry by looking for these early signs that she's hungry:

### Early Signs: "I'm hungry!"

- Stirring
- Mouth opening
- Rooting

### Mid Signs: "I'm hungry!"

- Stretching
- Movements
- Hand to mouth

### Late Signs: "Feed me now!"

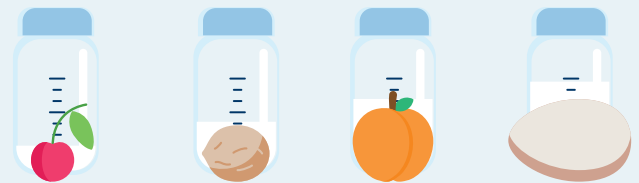
- Crying
- Frantic movement
- Turning red

If she's too frustrated or fussy to latch on, instead of giving a bottle, *try soothing her first*:

- Put baby upright skin-to-skin on chest
- Bounce her gently
- Make hushing noises
- Then try latching when she's calm

## > HOW much milk does my baby need?

At first, your newborn's tiny stomach can only hold a little milk. The amount of milk you produce and the amount your baby drinks *each feeding* will increase each day.



Day 1	Day 3	1 Week	2 Weeks
Cherry	Walnut	Apricot	Egg
5–7 ml	22–27 ml	45–60 ml	60+ ml
1– 1.5 Tsp	.75–1 ounce	1.5 –2 ounces	2+ ounces

## > HOW do I know my baby is getting enough?

A healthy baby may breastfeed **10–12 times or more in 24 hours, or every 1 ½ to 3 hours**.

Your baby will lose a little weight in her first few days. If she's back to her birthweight by her 10th day of life, it's a great sign she's drinking enough breast milk!

The number of baby's poopy and wet diapers can tell you how much milk he's drinking. You can expect:

### First 3–5 days of life

3–4 poops  
3–5 wet diapers

### First 5–7 days of life

3–6 poops  
4–6 wet diapers

Also, baby's poop changes in the first week, from sticky, black poop to yellow, liquidy poop.



## > HOW do I breastfeed?

Here are some common positions:



**CRADLE HOLD**



**CROSS-CRADLE HOLD**



**FOOTBALL HOLD**



**LAID-BACK HOLD**



**SIDE-LYING HOLD**

1. Hold your baby close, tummy to tummy, head tilting back, with his mouth touching your areola and your nipple pointed at his nose.
2. Wait for his mouth to open wide, then bring him on quickly! Your baby will drink more milk when has a lot of areola (darker part of breast) in his mouth, not just the nipple tip. This "deep latch" is the most comfortable position.

**How do I know baby is drinking?** You will see the jaw lower when she swallows, and you may hear a "cuhhh" sound.

**How do I know baby is finished?** She may stop sucking, turn away or become relaxed and sleepy.

*In the first few weeks, always offer the second breast. After a few weeks, some babies take one breast each feed.*



**In all positions, make sure the baby's tummy is facing your body so she can feed without twisting her neck.**

If you are in pain, remove the baby from the breast and try to get a deeper latch. A small amount of discomfort is normal in the first two weeks, but if you're having a lot of pain, ask for help! (see resources below)

### How to prepare for breastfeeding:

- Attend a breastfeeding class
- Learn all about breastfeeding in the first 5 days at [www.firstdroplets.com](http://www.firstdroplets.com)
- Learn the basics of breastfeeding and address common concerns at [www.readysetbabyonline.com](http://www.readysetbabyonline.com)
- Download these free apps: BreastBeginnings; Birth & Beyond

### WATCH how to latch baby to the breast:

- **Click or search:**  
"global health media attaching your baby at the breast"  
"IABLE Sandwich Hold/Asymmetric Latch"
- **Learn** breast massage to relieve engorgement:  
**Search:** "[The Basics of Breast Massage and Hand Expression](#)"
- **Learn** how to remove milk by hand:  
**Search:** "[Stanford hand expression video](#)"

- If supplementing...  
**Search:** "[IABLE Cup-Feeding](#)"  
**Search:** "[IABLE Paced Bottle Feeding](#)"
- For tips on returning to work, search "[making it work toolkit](#)"
- Ask your provider for a breast pump prescription
- Visit the CDC website for "[Proper Storage and Preparation of Breastmilk](#)"
- To find out if a medication is safe, call (806) 352-2519 or go to <http://www.infantrisk.com>

### If you need more breastfeeding support...

Attend a breastfeeding support group or schedule a one-on-one consult in person or virtually.

Call the NYC Breastfeeding Warmline:  
646-965-7212 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

Contact your local WIC office: 800-522-5006

**Search** [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org) to find a private lactation consultant



Scan code to visit our  
Breastfeeding Support page

**Montefiore Einstein**