

Common Breastfeeding Questions

- How often should my baby nurse?

Your baby should nurse 8-12 times in 24 hours. Baby will tell you when he's hungry by "rooting," sucking on his hands or tongue, or starting to wake. Just respond to baby's cues and latch baby on right away. Every mom and baby's feeding patterns will be unique. Some babies routinely breastfeed every 2-3 hours around the clock, while others nurse more frequently while awake and sleep longer stretches in between feedings. The usual length of a breastfeeding session can be 10-15 minutes on each breast or 15-30 minutes on only one breast; just as long as the pattern is consistent.

- Is baby getting enough breastmilk?

Look for these signs to be sure that your baby is getting enough breastmilk:

Breastfeed 8-12 times each day, baby is sucking and swallowing while breastfeeding, baby has 3-4 dirty diapers and 6-8 wet diapers each day, the baby is gaining 4-8 ounces a week after the first 2 weeks, baby seems content after feedings. If you still feel that your baby may not be getting enough milk, talk to your health care provider.



- How long should I breastfeed?

The World Health Organization and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends mothers to breastfeed for 12 months or longer. Breastmilk contains everything that a baby needs to develop for the first 6 months. Breastfeeding for at least the first 6 months is termed, "The Golden Standard." Mothers can begin breastfeeding one hour after giving birth. If preferred, mothers can breastfeed the baby into toddler-hood. Choosing to breastfeed for even a short period of time is still more beneficial than never breastfeeding baby. Substances in breastmilk decrease baby's risks of illnesses.

- What are the advantages of breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding for at least the first 6 months can cause 3 times fewer ear infections, 5 times fewer urinary tract infections, 5 times fewer serious illnesses, and 7 times fewer allergies. Breastfed babies also experience fewer instances of diarrhea, constipation, and spitting up. Additional benefits to breastfeeding include a decreased risk of diabetes, decreased risk of lymphoma (a type of childhood cancer), and possibly decrease the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS.)



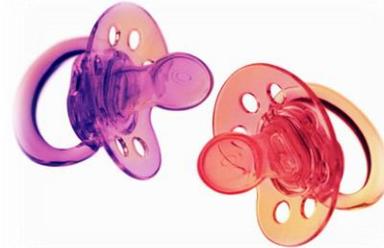
- When will my baby sleep through the night?

Babies will settle into their own feeding schedule after about 4-6 weeks after birth. Remember to be patient. All baby's feeding patterns are

different. After 6-12 weeks your baby may sleep for 4 or 5 hours during the night and then wake up to nurse. If you are able, try sleeping when the baby sleeps.

- Can I give my baby a pacifier?

It is best to wait until your baby is at least 4 weeks old before giving a pacifier. Offering a pacifier too early may make it more difficult for baby to latch on to the breast, effectively, and get enough to eat frequently enough. It is best just to let baby suck on his/her fist or fingers instead. Also, breastfeeding doesn't increase the risk for ear infections like providing a pacifier can.



- Do I need to change what I eat while breastfeeding?

A healthy eating plan is always a good idea, especially while breastfeeding. Make sure you eat a variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein. Water should be consumed often enough to satisfy your thirst. Urine output is a good indicator of whether you are drinking enough water. Urine should be a pale yellow.

- Can I have caffeine if I breastfeed?



Moderate amounts of caffeine can be consumed during breastfeeding. Babies are not affected by caffeine until the amount of caffeine equivalent to five 5 ounce cups of coffee is consumed (25 ounces.) One cup of coffee can range from 95-200mg of caffeine per 8 ounces. Soft drinks contain around 40mg of caffeine in 12 ounces. It is important to include all sources of caffeine when figuring caffeine intake. Caffeine sources can include coffee, tea, colas, large amounts of chocolate, and some over-the-counter drugs. Caffeine peaks after 5 hours in an adult, 96 hours in a newborn, and 14 hours in a 3-5 month-old. (Hale, p.100) You may be consuming too much caffeine while breastfeeding if your baby is wide-eyed, alert, doesn't sleep for long, and is unusually fussy after large caffeine consumption. After removing caffeine from the diet, the baby should begin to settle down after a few days.

Caffeine does not have to be eliminated from the diet while breastfeeding; however, it should be monitored to avoid excess consumption.

- Is it okay to smoke and breastfeed?

The nicotine in smoke can harm your baby. It is best to stop smoking while pregnant and breastfeeding. If you are unable to stop smoking then do not smoke around your baby or in an enclosed area with your baby; including the home and car. The benefits of breastfeeding your baby provide enough reason to continue breastfeeding, even if you are unable to quit smoking.

- Can I drink alcohol while breastfeeding?

It is best to not drink alcohol while breastfeeding because alcohol readily passes into breastmilk. If you choose to drink alcohol while breastfeeding, limit it to 1-2 drinks each week and wait 2 hours before pumping or breastfeeding.

- What are some ways Dads can support breastfeeding? What are some ways that Grandma can support breastfeeding?
Fathers can play an important role in breastfeeding. Click the link below to find ways that Dad can support breastfeeding. The same is true for Grandma or any other helper as well.

[\(Link to Family Support PowerPoint\)](#)

[\(Link to Fathers role PowerPoint\)](#)



- What are some tips for breastfeeding discretely in public?

Breastfeeding in public doesn't have to make you feel uncomfortable and can be done discreetly. Click on the link below to learn tips on breastfeeding in public.

[\(Link to Breastfeeding in Public PowerPoint\)](#)

- Is it okay to still breastfeed if I get sick?

Common colds, the flu, and diarrhea illnesses cannot be passed to your baby through breastmilk. Actually, breastmilk contains antibodies that are used to help your baby fight off infections and illnesses.



- Can I breastfeed while taking medications?

You can still breastfeed while taking medication unless you have a serious illness such as HIV/AIDS. Medications do not pass into the milk in quantities that are harmful to the baby. Most medications can be used while breastfeeding and very few cannot be used while breastfeeding. If you are taking medications or are about to start a new medication, be sure to inform your doctor that you are breastfeeding. For more information on taking medications while breastfeeding, look at this website:

<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/BreastMilkMeds.html>

- My baby's teething. How can I continue to breastfeed?

Although biting may want to make you quit breastfeeding, there are things that you can do to avoid this behavior. Try putting your finger in baby's mouth, removing baby from the breast, and firmly saying, "No." Do not yell or it may frighten baby. Use this time to teach your baby that there are negative consequences to biting by removing them from the breast. It is alright to provide comfort to him/her afterwards. Be sure not to laugh when biting occurs so that baby can learn that biting isn't allowed. Lastly, try offering a teething toy or, if baby is older, offer a drink from a cup or a snack.

- Can I return to work and continue breastfeeding?



Yes, you can continue to breastfeed after returning to work. It may take some planning but the benefits of continuing to breastfeed are worth it for you and the baby. Breastfeeding can reduce your chances of missing work and losing income; it keeps the baby healthy, and allows the mother-baby bond to continue even after being apart.

Continuing to breastfeed after returning to work will require you to express, collect, and store breastmilk for use when you are not with the baby. Look here for more information on pumping and collecting breastmilk. ([Link to Expressing Breastmilk PowerPoint](#))

- How do I store breastmilk?

Milk can be stored in any container that is safe for food to be stored in. The container should be labeled and dated before storing. It is important to store breastmilk in 3-4 ounce servings rather than in one large container. Thawed milk should be stored in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours. If any milk remains in the container after use, it should be used within 1 hour. ([Link to Storing Breastmilk PowerPoint](#))

- How long is pumped breastmilk good for?

Breastmilk should not be stored at room temperature for more than 5 hours. It should not be stored in the refrigerator for more than 5 days. It should not be stored in the freezer for more than 5 months. Breastmilk can be stored for 5 months to a year in a deep freezer.

Remember the Rule of 5:	
5 hours.....	Room Temperature
5 days.....	Refrigerator
5 months.....	Freezer Section
12 months.....	Deep Freezer

- How do I thaw breastmilk?

Breastmilk should be thawed in one of three ways: 1) Defrost breastmilk in the refrigerator overnight. 2) Place it under warm running water. 3) Place the sealed container in a bowl of warm water until the temperature reaches 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. DO NOT thaw milk in the microwave or heat it over the stove.

- If I received sample formula from the hospital in the mail, should I use it while breastfeeding?

You may have been sent home with formula from the hospital and told to use it if you feel like your baby isn't receiving enough breastmilk. Put it out of sight or give it away. There are negative effects on breastfeeding if you choose to supplement feedings with formula. Having

formula accessible can weaken your confidence in your ability to breastfeed. Choosing to use formula can cause engorgement because the breasts are not being emptied regularly. This can also decrease your milk supply because your body isn't receiving the cues to produce more milk. Just one bottle of formula can cause latching issues and can change the flora of baby's bowels, increasing risk for diarrhea or serious allergies. Instead of using formula, contact breastfeeding support professionals that can help increase your confidence in breastfeeding.

- Where can I find support from local breastfeeding professionals?

Contacting breastfeeding support professionals can increase your confidence in breastfeeding.

WIC:

A Certified Lactation Consultant can be found at your local WIC Office: located at 321 E. 4th Street, Joplin, Missouri. You can contact us at 417-623-1928.

- What is an IBCLC?

These are breastfeeding professionals who have the most knowledge and skill in providing breastfeeding support. They can teach you how to breastfeed comfortably by helping with proper positioning and latching. They can also answer any of your breastfeeding questions. You can meet with an IBCLC at your local WIC.

- What is a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor?

These are breastfeeding counselors that have the ability to help you learn the benefits of breastfeeding and how to overcome breastfeeding challenges. Because these counselors have breastfed their own baby, they have experience as well as knowledge to offer. You can meet with a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor at your local WIC.



Helpful Websites:

- ilca.org
- kellymom.com
- www.la lecheleague.org >> click on "Local Contacts" to find support in your area
- Chichi Mamas: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/chichimommakingstrides/>
- <https://www.text4baby.org/index.php/get-involved-pg/moms-families-and-friends>

The National Breastfeeding Helpline:

- Call 800-994-9662

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