

Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding is the natural process in which the mother feeds her baby with breast milk, which provides the nutrients and energy

necessary for the newborn to grow healthy and strong.

How is breast milk produced?

When the baby sucks, it sends signals to the brain that release hormones: one produces the milk and another helps it flow. As long as the baby suckles frequently, milk production will remain adequate.

Components of breast milk

- **Macronutrients:** fats, carbohydrates, and proteins that provide energy and support growth.
- **Micronutrients:** essential vitamins and minerals needed for development and proper body function.
- **Bioactive and protective factors:** substances that strengthen the immune system and protect against infections.

Benefits of breastfeeding

Breastfeeding offers benefits for both the baby and the mother.

Baby	Mother
• Provides the baby with essential nutrients in the easiest form to digest and absorb. • Contains antibodies and white blood cells that protect against infections. • Strengthens the bond with the mother through physical and emotional contact.	• Strengthens the bond with the baby. • Supports faster postpartum recovery. • Offers long-term benefits such as reduced risk of osteoporosis, obesity, and other conditions.

It is recommended that mothers without health problems offer exclusive breastfeeding during the baby's first six months of life.

How to hold the baby for breastfeeding?

Choose a comfortable position. In any posture, the baby should be able to tilt their head back slightly to move away from the breast when needed. Allow the baby to begin sucking when they are ready. Below are some examples of positions.



Cross-cradle position:

Hold the baby with the arm opposite the breast you are using to nurse.

Cradle position: Make sure the baby's head

rests in the bend of your arm, near the elbow.

Laid-back position: Lie back, support your back with something comfortable, and place the baby on your abdomen.

Side-lying position: Place the baby on their side, facing the mother. Support the baby's back.

How to help the baby latch correctly?

- Align the baby with the nipple. Hold the baby so that their ear, shoulder, and hips stay in a straight line. This helps achieve a comfortable and effective latch.
- Encourage the baby to open their mouth. Gently touch the baby's lower lip with your nipple so they open their mouth wide.
- Bring the baby to the breast. Move the baby toward your breast (not the breast toward the baby). Make sure there is a small space between the baby's nose and your breast so they can breathe easily.
- Ensure proper contact with the areola. The baby's lower lip and chin should touch the areola (the darker area around the nipple).

Signs of a correct latch

- You can hear the baby swallowing.
- You do not feel pain in the breast or nipple while breastfeeding.
- The nipple keeps its normal shape after the baby finishes, the same as when you started.
- The breast looks smooth, without wrinkles or dimples, while the baby is sucking.

How to know if the baby is getting enough milk?

- Breastfeeds on demand 8 to 12 times in 24 hours.
- You can see and hear the baby swallowing, and they take natural pauses while sucking.
- Your breasts feel less full after each feeding.
- The baby gains between 4 and 7 ounces per week after the first 5 days of life.
- The baby wets 6 or more diapers per day between days 5 and 7 of life.

Signs of hunger cues

- The baby moves their head and lifts their arms.
- They may make soft sounds or fuss.
- They suck on their hands or fists.
- Crying is a late sign of hunger.



Signs of satiety in the baby

- The baby finishes and pulls away from the breast on their own.
- Their hands are relaxed, not tense or closed into fists.
- They may fall asleep after feeding.

When should you contact your doctor?

- If you have a fever.
- If you feel you are not producing enough milk for your baby.
- If one or both breasts are red, swollen, painful, warm, or hot.
- You feel depressed.

Integrate your partner into the breastfeeding process:

- Communicate the importance of breastfeeding.
- Allow them to feed the baby with expressed milk in a bottle.
- Ask for help with household tasks.
- Once the baby finishes feeding, let them help burp the baby.

How to store expressed breast milk?

Freshly expressed milk		
Location	Temperature	How long?
Table/Countertop	Room temperature (77 ° F)	Up to 4 hours
Refrigerator	(39 ° F)	Up to 4 days is best
Freezer	(0 ° F)	Up to 9 months

Social and Emotional Aspects

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during breastfeeding, please visit your pediatrician, primary care physician, or contact the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line 1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health 787-641-9133

References:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/Spanish/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Paginas/storing-and-preparing-expressed-breast-milk.aspx>
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