



# **Breastfeeding**

## **Baby's Best Start**

[www.cdphe.state.co.us/ps/ns/wic/wichom.asp](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ps/ns/wic/wichom.asp)

WIC CO/UT 04

## **Giving Your Baby the Best!**

Congratulations! You have a new baby on the way. Now is the time to learn about breastfeeding your baby. Breastfeeding gives your baby the best start in life.

Getting ready for breastfeeding before your baby is born can give you the confidence and information needed to successfully breastfeed. Reading, talking with your WIC educator and taking a breastfeeding class are all ways you can learn more about breastfeeding.



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with permission from: “Breastfeeding – Baby’s Best Start”  
by Baylor College of Medicine, and  
“Infant Feeding Guide – Breastfeeding”  
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## Breastfeeding. The Gift of Love.

Your breast milk is the very best food for your baby, it is human milk. The longer you breastfeed, the healthier it is for you and your baby.

Remember, breastfeeding is worth it! Your milk gives your baby the very best start in life. And only you can give it!!

All moms have questions! Please call your WIC breastfeeding educator. We love to help our moms. It can make you feel better! Just call.

WIC Breastfeeding Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Why Breastfeed?

Your milk is the best start you can give your baby because:

- Breast milk has everything your baby needs to grow strong and healthy.
- Breastfed babies have fewer ear infections, stomach and respiratory illnesses.
- Breastfed babies have fewer problems with constipation and diarrhea.
- Breast milk will always meet your baby's growing needs.

Breastfeeding is good for you, too. Breastfeeding:

- helps you lose weight.
- reduces your risk for some cancers.
- helps you to form a special bond with your baby.
- Breast milk is always ready to go! No need to fix bottles.

Breastfeeding is the best gift a mother can give her baby and herself!



## The Truth About Breastfeeding

***You don't need to eat special foods to breastfeed!***

Your baby will grow very well on your milk.

***Breastfeeding should not be painful!*** Proper latch-on and positioning of your baby will keep breastfeeding from hurting.

***Breastfeeding doesn't have to be embarrassing!*** You can cover up with a blanket or breastfeed in a private area.

***Family and friends can help feed the baby too!*** Breast milk can be fed from a bottle once your baby is about 3 to 4 weeks old.



## Breast Milk Facts

Breast milk is all your baby needs for the first 4 to 6 months of life. Formula, water, or other foods are not needed.

The first milk a mother makes is colostrum.

Colostrum:

- Comes in very small amounts, about 1- 2 teaspoons per feeding.
- Helps protect baby from illness.
- Looks yellow and thick or clear and watery.
- Is all your baby needs in the first few days until your milk comes in.

Around 2 –5 days after delivery, your milk will come in.

- Your milk will be thin and watery and look yellowish or bluish in color.
- You may feel a swelling in your breasts when your milk comes in.
- Breastfeed every 1½ to 3 hours.
- Your baby's stool will change from a dark-tarry stool to a yellow-mustard soft stool after your milk comes in.

## What Foods Should I Eat?

- Don't worry if your diet isn't "perfect." You will still be able to breastfeed successfully.
- Eat a variety of foods with lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Continue to take your prenatal vitamins while breastfeeding.
- Make sure to drink liquids like water, juice, milk, and soups to satisfy your thirst. Have a nutritious drink each time you breastfeed.



## What About Caffeine?

Most women can drink 2 caffeinated beverages a day without bothering their baby. Some babies may be sensitive to caffeine. If your baby seems irritable after you drink a caffeinated beverage, you may want to drink less.

Women who exclusively breastfeed receive extra WIC foods, including carrots and tuna.

## Are There Some Foods I Should Avoid?

Some mothers worry that they shouldn't eat foods like chocolate, cabbage, broccoli, or spicy foods while breastfeeding. Most breastfeeding mothers can eat these foods without any problems. If a certain food makes your baby more fussy, avoid eating it for awhile, then try it again in a few weeks.



## Self-Care

- Try to get plenty of rest. Take naps when your baby does.
- Get support from people who encourage breastfeeding.

## Family Planning

Even though you are breastfeeding, you can still get pregnant! Choose a method of birth control prior to delivery. Your family planning clinic or doctor can help you choose a safe and effective method. **Be sure to remind them that you are breastfeeding!**

## Breastfeeding When You're Sick

You can keep breastfeeding through most illnesses, like coughs, colds, fever, or common diarrhea. Your milk is still good and it will even further protect your baby from many illnesses including against your sickness. If you have questions about breastfeeding when sick, call your doctor or clinic.



## Medications



Always check with your doctor before taking any pills or medications, including over-the-counter medications. While many medications are safe to take while breastfeeding, some medications appear in the breast milk and may be harmful to your baby.

**Be sure to tell your doctor and dentist that you are breastfeeding and call your WIC breastfeeding counselor for questions.**

## Can I Drink or Smoke While Breastfeeding?

It is best not to drink alcohol while you breastfeed. The alcohol in beer, wine, and liquor passes quickly into your milk and alcohol can harm your baby.

If you choose to drink, do so only occasionally, in small amounts, and after breastfeeding. Limit your intake to a glass of beer or wine, 1 or 2 times a week.

Smoking should be avoided while breastfeeding. Nicotine and other harmful products pass into breast milk. If you are unable to quit, try cutting back on the number of cigarettes you smoke and smoke after breastfeeding rather than right before. Always smoke away from your baby. Second-hand smoke is very dangerous to your baby.

## Street Drugs

Street drugs should never be used while breastfeeding. They are harmful to you and your baby. If you use drugs, do not breastfeed. Please seek help so you can take care of yourself, as well as your baby. If you have HIV/AIDS, you should not breastfeed. If you don't know your HIV status, talk to your doctor about getting tested.

## When to Breastfeed Your Baby

Your baby needs to eat often because his stomach is very small. Feeding often will also help build your milk supply and help prevent your breasts from becoming too full.

- During the first month of life, a baby needs to eat every 1½ to 3 hours (8-12 times in 24 hours).
- A feeding may take 10-15 minutes on each breast once your milk comes in.



### Wake a Sleepy Baby

Since your baby's tummy is small, it is not good to wait longer than 3 hours to feed. Gently wake your baby to feed. If your baby is gaining weight well, it may be okay to have one 4-5 hour period of sleep in 24 hours.

## When Babies are Extra Hungry

There are times when babies grow much faster than usual. This often happens at 2-3 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months of age. During these growth spurts your baby will want to breastfeed more often. Nursing more often will help you make more milk. It is not necessary to give formula. In fact if you give formula, your body will think it doesn't need to make more milk.

## Positions for Breastfeeding

You may want to nurse in a sitting position. Your back and arms should be supported. A pillow under your arm may be helpful.



### Cradle Hold

Lay baby on his side with his chest to your chest. Support his head and back on your forearm. Tuck baby's lower arm in close to his side.



### **Cross Cradle Position**

Hold baby in a cradle hold (previous page) then switch arms. With one hand support baby by the back of his neck. Baby should be on his side; we call this “tummy to tummy”.

### **Side Clutch Hold**

Lay baby next to your side on pillows. Bring baby’s chest to your side. Support baby’s head at neck and shoulders with your hand. Let baby’s bottom and legs rest on the chair or have her legs go up the back of the chair.



You may prefer lying down to nurse. Be sure your back and head are supported. Pillows may be helpful.



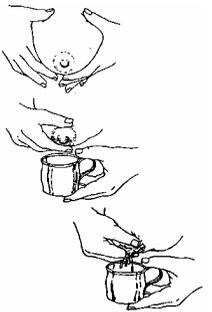
### **Lying Down**

Lie on your side with your knees bent.  
Lay baby on his side with his chest to your chest.  
Roll your body forward or backward to bring your nipple close to baby. You can support baby’s head and back with your lower arm or a pillow or rolled up blanket.

*The most important thing is to be comfortable!*

## **To Remove Milk By Hand**

- First, wash your hands.
- Then gently massage your breast, moving your hand toward your nipple.
- Next, place your fingers and thumb about one inch behind the nipple as shown in the picture.
- Gently push back toward your chest. Press your fingers together, and roll your thumb and fingers forward. Do this several times until your milk begins to flow.
- Move your hand around your breast and continue.
- Collect the milk in a clean bowl or cup.



## **To Save Your Milk**



- Store your milk in clean plastic or glass bottles or plastic bottle liners. If you plan to freeze the milk, use double bags.
- Refrigerate milk for up to 48 hours or freeze it.

## **I Am Worried About Breastfeeding in Public. What Can I Do?**

- Plan ahead and wear a top that can be lifted from the waist or unbuttoned in front.
- Cover your baby and breast with a light blanket or shawl.
- Use comfortable dressing rooms or resting areas in the mall.

## **What Should I Do If My Breasts Leak?**

Most new mothers leak milk. Leaking decreases as time goes by.

- To stop the flow, apply pressure against the nipples. Cross your arms against your chest or press against the side that is leaking with the palm of your hand.
- Use nursing pads. Avoid ones with a plastic liner.
- Wear an over sweater or vest.

## Normal Washing...

It is a good idea to keep your hands clean before doing baby “things” to prevent the spread of germs and bacteria.

- Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water after you change baby’s diaper or go to the bathroom.
- Bathe with a mild soap.
- Avoid alcohol, other drying agents, and creams on your breasts
- No preparation of the breasts is needed. You don’t need to toughen your nipples.

## Can I Give a Bottle?



Yes, but wait until the baby is 3 to 4 weeks old and nursing well before giving the first bottle. If you give the bottle sooner, your baby may get confused and not breastfeed well, since the bottle nipple is different than your nipple. If you need to give a bottle, it’s best to give the baby a bottle of your own milk. This will help you maintain your milk supply. **Giving infant formula too soon or too often will decrease your milk supply.**

Remember, as your body (breasts) decide how much milk to make, based on how much your baby is taking, you will not be as full at about week 3. You may catch yourself asking “do I have enough milk?” This is normal for you to feel more comfortable and not so full. Just remember to go back to page 7 and see if you baby is getting enough milk.

## Returning to Work or School

With a little planning you can breastfeed while working or attending school. Try to stay at home as long as you can to get breastfeeding off to a good start. Here are some options for when you do need to go back to work or school:

- Find a caregiver close to work or school. By being close you can go to your baby or have your baby brought to you to breastfeed.
- Arrange for a place to collect and store your breast milk at work or school. Leave your milk with the caregiver to feed the next day.
- Have the caregiver feed your baby formula when you are away and breastfeed frequently when you are with your baby.

## Breastfeeding Your Baby

### Putting Your Baby to Breast

- Hold your baby close with his nose in front of your nipple. Your baby will be looking up at your breast. Your baby should be positioned so you are chest-to-chest with each other.
- Hold your breast behind the areola, the dark area around the nipple. Put your thumb on top and your fingers underneath or put your thumb and fingers on each side of the areola, whichever is most comfortable.



- Gently touch your baby’s upper lip with your nipple. (See picture A)



- When baby opens very wide, pull the baby close so that as much of the areola as possible is inside his mouth. (See picture B)



- Pull baby’s hips close so that his chest touches yours. You may need to lift your breast so your baby can breathe easily. (See picture C)

### To Take Baby Off the Breast

- Gently break the suction by placing a clean finger in the corner of your baby’s mouth between the gums (See picture D). Remove your breast when your baby opens his mouth.



### Switching Breasts

- You may want to burp your baby before changing to your other breast. At the next feeding, you may start on the breast your baby nursed last.

## How Do I Know My Baby is Getting Enough to Eat?

Some moms aren't sure if their baby is getting enough. This is normal to feel this way. We know you want to do the best for your baby. So if you are not sure, please call your WIC breastfeeding counselor or your doctor. Here are a few guidelines that will make you feel better about knowing if your baby is taking enough milk from you!

\*\*\* Signs your baby is getting enough milk: \*\*\*

- Baby has 6-8 wet diapers in a 24 hours period.
- Baby has at least 4 yellow, seedy, very soft stools in 24 hours. (After one month of age, your baby will have fewer messy diapers.)
- Your baby has gained back to its birth weight by 2 weeks.
- Your baby is gaining about 5-7 ounces a week.
- Your baby is transferring milk from you and swallowing, not sleeping at breast for about 10 minutes on each breast.
- Your breasts feel full before feeding and softer after you have nursed.
- You feed every 1 ½ hours to 3 hours (about 8 – 12 times in 24 hours.)

Your body will make as much milk as your baby needs. By nursing often and for as long as your baby wants. The more milk your baby removes from your breast, the more milk you will make.



## When Baby Cries

Crying is your baby's way of saying "I need something!" Try feeding your baby first. If she continues to cry, it may mean that she needs:

- a clean diaper
- to be burped
- some rocking or loving
- a nap
- more or less blankets or clothing to be comfortable

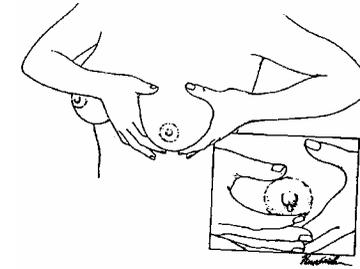
## How Do I Know My Baby is Hungry?

Moms learn to read their baby's signals in the first few days. A baby who sucks on his hands, roots (opens mouth wide and searches for milk), or gets fussy is telling mom she is hungry. Feed her as soon as you see these signs. Learning your baby's signals can help your baby have a relaxed feeding. Crying is a late sign of feeding.

## Breast Fullness

Three to five days after birth, your milk becomes more plentiful. Your breasts become fuller. By the end of the first week your body adjusts to making milk and this fullness goes away.

If your breasts become uncomfortably full and large it may mean you need to nurse more often or for longer periods of time.



To reduce the fullness, remove some milk by hand or with a breast pump. This will make you more comfortable and soften the nipples so your baby can nurse.

Cold packs can be used between feedings to reduce swelling.

You should feel better in one or two days.

If you have a fever, call your doctor or clinic. Continue to breastfeed - that will help!

## Prevention of Sore Nipples

Some nipple tenderness is normal in the first couple of weeks. Breastfeeding should not be painful. A baby that is latched on wrong or held in a poor position can cause nipple soreness.

When your baby latches onto the breast make sure he gets a mouthful of the areola. If he attaches to just the nipple end you will need to take him off the breast and re-latch. Make sure your baby opens his mouth very wide before latching him on again.

Try holding your baby in different positions. Changing positions can keep your nipples from getting too sore in one place.

When possible, let your nipples air-dry. Avoid using breast pads with plastic liners.



How long do I plan to Breastfeed: \_\_\_\_\_  
WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

