

# Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a skill that requires practice to help you learn the positions and techniques that work best for you and your baby.

In the first few days, you and your baby will be getting to know each other and figuring out the most comfortable way to breastfeed for you both

How long it takes to get the hang of breastfeeding is different for everyone so try not to compare yourself to other people.



# The First Moments

Straight after birth, enjoy some skin to skin time with your baby. This can help to calm your baby, regulate breathing and also help to keep your baby warm. This skin to skin time is valuable in experiencing your first breastfeed with your baby as they will be alert and ready to feed within the first hour post birth. Your midwife will be there to help you with this first feed.



# Benefits of Breastfeeding

It provides  
free  
nutrition  
for your  
baby



Breastmilk is packed  
full of nutrients,  
vitamins and minerals  
and is tailored to the  
needs of your baby



Breastmilk contains  
healthy bacteria to  
aid your little ones  
digestion and build  
immunity against  
disease

Reduces the risk of  
mums developing  
certain types of  
cancer including  
ovarian or breast



Breastfeeding  
provides  
comfort and  
security

Breastfeeding can  
help to build strong  
bonds between  
mother and baby

Babies who are  
breastfed for  
longer are less  
likely to develop  
infections



# How To Breastfeed:



Hold your baby's whole body close and make sure that their nose is in line with your nipple.



Let your baby's head tip back a little so that their top lip can brush against your nipple. This motion should help your baby to make a wide, open mouth ready to latch



When your baby's mouth opens wide, their chin should be able to touch your breast first, with their head tipped back so that their tongue is able to reach as much breast as possible.



With your baby's chin firmly touching your breast and their nose clear, their mouth should be wide open. You should see much more of the darker nipple skin above your baby's top lip than below their bottom lip. Your baby's cheeks will look full and rounded as they feed.

## Signs that your baby is breastfeeding **well**:

- Your baby has a large mouthful of breast
- Breastfeeding is comfortable and does not hurt (The first few sucks may feel strong)
- Your baby's cheeks remain rounded while sucking
- Your baby's chin is touching your breast
- Your baby comes off your breast on their own once finished feeding
- You should be able to see more of the dark skin around your nipple above your baby's top lip than below the bottom lip
- Your baby will rhythmically take long sucks and swallows

# Responsive Breastfeeding

Responsive feeding is all about understanding your baby's cues to ensure that you are responding to their needs for both milk and also comfort.

Babies will go through different feeding patterns as they grow; some days wanting to feed more often than others. Letting them feed as and when they need will help to ensure your baby is getting milk when they need it.

Responsive feeding is also about considering your own needs. Sometimes you may offer a feed to help if your breasts are uncomfortably full or if you need to feed around other commitments.



# Breastfeeding and Diet

When breastfeeding you don't need to follow a particular diet but you should try to ensure that you are consuming a variety of healthy and balanced foods including:



You may want to limit or avoid consuming the following while breastfeeding:

**Caffeine** This is a stimulant which can make your baby restless. If you do consume caffeine try to stick to 300mg or less per day:

**Alcohol:** When breastfeeding, traces of what you eat and drink pass through to your breast milk. It is safer not to drink alcohol, however an occasional drink (1 or 2 units, once or twice a week) is unlikely to harm your baby.

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