

Breastfeeding

Getting started

Your decision to breastfeed

Your decision to breastfeed means you will be giving your baby the best possible start in life.

These guidelines will help you get started. If you would like more help, please ask the staff or refer to the list on the back of this leaflet.

Make yourself comfortable before breastfeeding

Some things that may help are:

- a supportive firm backed chair,
- a cushion, pillow, or foot stool
- pain relief (if still needed after the birth),
- attending to your personal needs (eg privacy / toilet / hand washing / drink),
- comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict you or your baby whilst breastfeeding.



Hold your baby so that ...

- your baby is on his/her side facing towards you, with his/her back and shoulders supported by your hand,
- he/she is close to you with the baby's chest against yours,
- his/her lower arm is tucked around you, and
- his/her mouth is opposite your nipple.

Getting the baby interested and attached

- Your baby may be ready to feed if he/she moves his/her hands to their mouth, moves his/her head from side to side, or starts to wake up. If needed, you may help your baby to wake gently, by having skin to skin contact, talking to him, or changing the nappy.
- When you are breastfeeding, it may help to support the breast from underneath with your cupped hand.
- Touch baby's lips with your nipple to encourage him/her to open the mouth widely,
- When the mouth is wide open, bring your baby quickly onto your breast,
- Make sure he/she takes a good mouthful of breast, not just the nipple

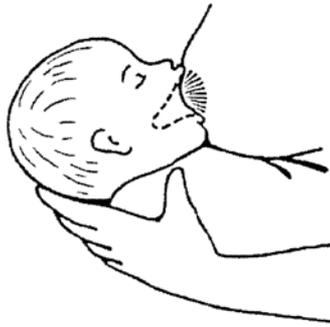
If the baby is in the right position

- the chin and bottom lip will meet the breast first,
- the nose is clear of the breast and the baby is breathing easily,
- it feels right - if it hurts, it's probably not right, so start again. Slide a finger between your nipple and baby's mouth to break the suction, and then start again.
- after a few initial sucks, the baby should settle into a slower rhythmical sucking and swallowing pattern,
- you should be able to hear swallowing and see the muscles of his/her face and ears moving.



When the baby is finished

When your baby has had enough, he/she may fall asleep or let go the breast on their own. If you need to take him/her off, gently put your finger in the corner of his/her mouth to break the suction. Don't just pull the nipple out of the baby's mouth, as this may cause damage to the nipple



Commonly asked questions

Q. How long should a feed take?

A. There is no need to time feeds. Watch your baby to make sure he/ she is sucking and swallowing. It is not the time how long feeds take that is important: it is how well your baby feeds. Some babies prefer to feed often for short feeds, while others enjoy longer feeds. Start each feed from alternate breasts to ensure equal stimulation.

Q. How often should I feed?

A. It's best to feed your baby on demand. A newborn baby needs to feed frequently - at least 8 feeds in 24 hours, including during the night. Babies are often more awake during the night. As your baby grows and breastfeeding establishes, their needs may change.

Q. Do I need to burp my baby?

A. It's not absolutely necessary but, if you want, you should try burping your baby when you swap sides and after feeding.

Q. How do I know if my baby is getting enough?

A. This is a common worry for many mothers. You can be reassured if your baby has 6 - 8 wet nappies a day, is gaining weight, and is reasonably content between feeds.

You may be able to hear the baby swallowing during feeds and he/she will have a good latch at the breast. The more often your baby feeds at your breast, the more milk you will make. Your breasts may feel softer after feeds.

Q. Should I give my baby a pacifier/dummy?

A. While you and your baby are learning to breastfeed, it's best to avoid using a dummy. It may interfere with your baby's sucking at the breast.

For further information and assistance

Breastfeeding assistance is available at all metropolitan and country **Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)** locations. For more information phone 1300 733 606 or www.cyh.com

Parent Helpline Phone 1300 733 606

Australian Breastfeeding Association (24 hour telephone service) Mum2Mum Helpline 1800 686 268 or www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Raising Children Network www.raisingchildren.net.au



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by WCHN consumers August 2018

For more information

Women's and Children's Hospital Network

72 King William Road, North Adelaide, SA 5006

Telephone: (08) 8161 7000 www.wch.sa.gov.au

Non-English speaking: for information in languages other than English, call the interpreting and Translating Centre and ask them to call Department of Health. This service is available at no cost to you, contact (08) 8226 1990.

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