



what I need to know about breastfeeding my new baby



breastfeeding my new baby

Tresillian Parent's Help Line
(02) 9787 0855
or 1800 637 357
(Freecall outside the Sydney Metropolitan area)
www.tresillian.net

The experience of Breastfeeding is unique as no two mothers or babies are the same.

Successful breastfeeding starts with the desire to breastfeed and correct positioning and attachment. Breastfeeding may take up to 6-8 weeks to establish. Your baby needs to take a deep mouthful of the nipple as they latch on to breastfeed. This stimulates the suck reflex on the roof of your baby's mouth. All women will experience increased nipple and areola sensitivity while feeding is being established. Correct attachment will result in more comfortable feeding, and a satisfied baby.

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Positioning and Attaching at the Breast

- Ensure you are positioned comfortably with your back well supported
- Allow your breast to fall naturally
- Unwrap your baby to allow easy handling and avoid overheating
- Ensure your baby is well supported behind the neck and your baby's body is facing you with baby flexed and held close. Baby's head should be free with the top lip in line with the nipple.
- Your baby should be slightly lower than the breast with the lower arm brought around under the breast
- Your baby's chin is directed towards the breast
- Support the breast with your free hand with your fingers well back from the nipple/areola and the nipple aimed towards your baby's nose
- A wide mouth gape is encouraged by allowing your baby to feel the underside of the nipple with the top lip
- As your baby's mouth gapes widely, bring quickly to the breast with the nipple aimed towards the roof of the mouth with your baby's chin coming to the breast first.

Signs of Good Attachment

- It is usual to experience some nipple sensitivity (discomfort) when you start the feed, however, this should ease after a minute or two.
- Your baby will have taken not only the nipple but also a large amount of breast tissue into the mouth, forming a teat with their tongue.
- After an initial short burst of sucking, the rhythm should be slow and even with occasional pauses and deep jaw movements.
- Pauses are a normal part of the feed and these become more frequent as the feed progresses

- Noticeable changes in your baby's sucking/ swallowing pattern is the most consistent sign of milk transfer; audible swallows may also be heard at the commencement of breastfeeding
- If your baby has been properly attached your nipple may be lengthened, but will look normal - your nipple should not be squashed or pinched
- If your baby's cheeks are being sucked in or there is audible clicking, your baby may not be attached correctly; detach by placing a clean finger between your baby's gums to break the suction. Correctly re-attach as described above.

Feeding Process

Time spent feeding will vary with each baby. As a guide when breastfeeding is beginning, a feed may take up to an hour, but as your baby matures the duration of the breastfeeds decreases.

When your baby is feeding, a drawing rhythmical suck should be seen. Initially your baby may suck vigorously, then slow down to a pattern of a few sucks followed by a pause. This cycle usually continues for the length of the feed. Your baby might pull off the breast or become very sleepy. This does not always mean the feed has finished. Your baby could need waking to continue feeding by:

- nappy change
- allowing a few minutes for your baby to burp, though they do not always need to burp
- Both breasts should be offered at each feed, but the first breast needs to be 'emptied' before your baby is offered the second breast. A change in breast fullness indicates transfer of milk (side

finished) in the early weeks. This feeling of fullness may change at each feed as the milk volume in your breasts is changing in response to your baby's needs

- Alternate breasts at each feed e.g. start with the right breast for one feed, then the left breast for the next feed
- Your baby may or may not feed from the second breast, depending upon appetite and development or growth
- This second attachment to the breast may be of a shorter duration but will assist in maintaining a good milk supply
- Babies need adequate sleep to feed well
- All babies will have different feeding and sleeping patterns. e.g. some can feed more often at one time of the day and have less feeds and a longer sleep at another
- It can be normal for a newborn to feed at intervals of 2 to 5 hourly
- In the early months your baby needs a minimum of 6-8 feeds in 24 hours

Let down Reflex

Some mothers report **no** noticeable sign of the "let down" reflex, whilst other mothers notice one or more of the following signs:

- Tingling or prickling "pins and needles"
- Sudden feeling of fullness
- Increase in skin temperature
- Feeling of well-being or relaxation
- Dripping, leaking or spurting from the opposite breast
- Some women describe an intense thirst
- Uterine contractions in the immediate postpartum period

NOTE: It may take you several days of observation after "the milk comes in" to recognise these changes.

REMEMBER EACH CHILD IS AN INDIVIDUAL AND DEVELOPS AT THEIR OWN PACE.

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*Always read the label. Use only as directed. If symptoms persist, see a healthcare professional.

For further assistance:

- Visit either your local child and family health nurse or doctor
- Call Tresillian Parent's Help Line on (02) 9787 0855 or 1800 637 357 (Freecall outside Sydney)
- Contact a Tresillian Nurse on-line at Tresillian Live Advice by visiting our website at www.tresillian.net