

# Breastfeeding Your Baby: Your Getting-Started Guide

Maternal & Newborn · Postpartum

Breast milk is the right food for your baby and helps protect against infection. These steps help your baby latch well and get enough milk.

## Get a good latch

- Hold your baby tummy to tummy, nose to nipple.
- Wait for a wide-open mouth. Then bring your baby to your breast.
- Lips turn out. The chin touches your breast. You hear swallowing.

## Feed often

- Feed 8 to 12 times in 24 hours.
- Feed when your baby roots, sucks on hands, or smacks lips. Crying is a late sign.
- Let your baby finish one breast, then offer the other.
- Give only breast milk for about 6 months. Give vitamin D drops as directed.

## Know your baby gets enough

- Wet diapers: 1 on day 1, 2 on day 2, 3 on day 3, and at least 6 a day by day 5.
- Poop turns yellow by day 5.
- Most babies are back to birth weight by 10 to 14 days.

## Care for your breasts

- Full, hard breasts on days 3 to 5: feed often and use cold packs between feedings.

- Sore nipples: check the latch.
- Ask for a lactation consultant (breastfeeding expert) if pain lasts.

### Call your provider today if you have

- A red, painful area on your breast with fever or chills
- Cracked or bleeding nipples, or pain through the whole feeding
- A baby with fewer wet diapers than expected, or fewer than 8 feedings
- A baby with yellow skin spreading to the belly or legs
- **A baby with a temperature of 100.4 F (38 C) or higher: call right away.**

### Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- A baby with blue or gray lips or skin
- A baby who is limp or very hard to wake
- A baby who stops breathing or struggles to breathe
- A baby having a seizure

*This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.*

Online: [nclexpace.com/patient-education/breastfeeding-basics/patient](https://nclexpace.com/patient-education/breastfeeding-basics/patient)

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