



# Breastfeeding...

is easy to learn

## How do I start breastfeeding in the hospital?

Tell the nurses you want to breastfeed.

Ask a nurse to help you learn how to breastfeed.

Start to breastfeed as soon after delivery as you can.

Keep the baby in the room with you, both day and night. This is the easiest way to know when your baby wants to be fed.

Ask to use a breast pump if you or your baby are ill and unable to nurse.

## What do I need to know when I start breastfeeding?

Feed your baby whenever he or she seems hungry. Your baby can feed as often and as long as he or she likes. Don't forget to feed your baby during the night, too.

The more you nurse in the first few days, the better it is for you and your baby. This may be as often as 12 times in 24 hours.

For the first few weeks feed your baby only from your breasts. This will help you build your milk supply. Your healthy baby does not need water, sugar water, formula or anything else from a bottle.

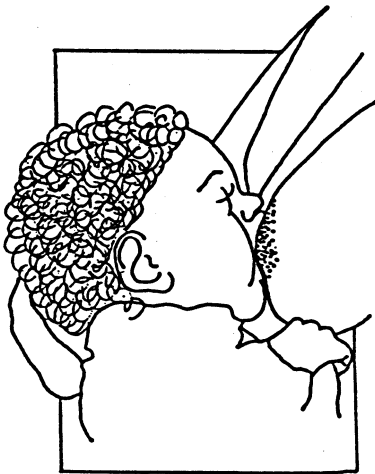


## What will my milk be like?

Colostrum is the mother's first milk. This thick, rich milk provides all the nutrition your baby needs for the first few days of life. It also helps protect your baby from infection.

Colostrum will last one to three days, and then your milk may change in colour and in amount. Milk naturally changes to meet all the needs of your growing baby.

## How do I start nursing?



Get as comfortable as possible before you begin.  
If you are sore, ask your nurse for pain medication.

Hold your baby so that his or her body is facing yours.  
Open the baby's arms, and wrap them around you like a hug. Your baby's mouth should be opposite your nipple.

Hold your breast in your hand. Stroke the baby's lips with a nipple until the baby's mouth opens wide, like a yawn.  
Then quickly pull the baby onto your breast.

Have the baby take a large mouthful of breast.

Hold the baby close while nursing.

Breastfeeding should not hurt.  
If it hurts, take your baby off the breast and try again.

After the baby finishes the first breast, offer the other side.  
Some babies do not need to suck very long on the second breast.

Try to burp your baby after each breast.

If you need to remove your baby from your breast, place a finger in the corner of your baby's mouth to break the suction.

Start the next feeding with the breast you offered last.  
A safety pin on your bra may help you remember which breast to use first.



# How do I hold my baby while breastfeeding?

Choose any position that is comfortable for you.

It is good to use different positions.  
This will help you avoid sore nipples.

These pictures show some positions you can use.



## How do I take care of my breasts?

Use only water to clean your nipples. Soap can cause dryness and cracking.

Keep your nipples dry between feedings. After a feeding and whenever possible, uncover your breasts to allow air around your nipples. You may wish to dry your nipples with a hairdryer set on low.

Some leaking of breast milk is normal. When you feel you are about to leak, cross your arms and press hard against your breasts. This usually stops leaking.

If you use breast pads, change them when they get wet. Do not use breast pads that have a plastic back.

To protect your nipples, express a few drops of milk and rub the milk gently on your nipples. You do not need to use a special breast cream.

## How can I be sure my baby is getting enough milk?

The more your baby nurses, the more milk your body will make. After the first few days, you can tell that your baby is getting enough milk when:

- you hear swallowing  
and
- your baby has 6 to 8 wet diapers each day  
and
- in the first month of life, your baby should have at least 2 soft bowel movements a day



There are many people who can answer questions or help you with breastfeeding when you get home.

Some choices are:

- ☎ your Public Health Nurse
- ☎ La Leche League or Breastfeeding Support Group
- ☎ a breastfeeding clinic
- ☎ a breastfeeding consultant
- ☎ your doctor

Public Health Services

