

BREASTFEEDING SUGGESTIONS AND BENEFITS

Establishing breastfeeding

- Find a comfortable position away from stress to nurse. This allows easy let-down.
- Bring the baby to the breast rather than the other way around. This avoids pulling on the nipple, which creates poor suction and nipple soreness.
- Allow the baby to develop their own patterns; attempts to schedule increases parental anxiety and imposes stress on the baby. Allow time for adjustment to the outer world. A pattern will develop between you and your baby.
- Babies will feed between 8 to 18 times per day. Some learn the skill of suckling more quickly than others. Allow for your baby's uniqueness.

Nipple Soreness

Temporary soreness usually occurs when beginning to breastfeed. These suggestions may help:

- A quality diet with high vitamin C intake.
- Apply warm black tea bags to the nipples between feedings using a bandaid to keep them in place.
- Apply lanolin cream on the nipples after feeding unless you are allergic to wool.
- Air drying the nipples after feeding is helpful.
- Break the suction by placing a finger on the baby's mouth before removing the baby from the breast. Apply vitamin E oil directly to the sore nipple.

- Try different positions for holding the baby, which may help them to grasp both the areola and nipple instead of just the nipple.
- Don't wash the breasts with soap. Use only water.

Foods

Be Sure To:

- Have a glass of liquid with every feeding. Eat plenty of high quality and nutritious foods. You are still eating for two.

Avoid:

- Coffee and chocolate (frequently cause colic).
- Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and brussel sprouts (may cause colic in some babies). Dairy (may cause congestion or rashes - watch for signs and try removing dairy for a few days.)

Clogged Duct

- Treat as soon as possible to prevent mastitis. Nurse more frequently.
- Continue nursing on the affected breast. Cessation of nursing can increase stasis, increase discomfort, and even endanger milk supply. Nurse frequently but just enough to empty the breast.
- Apply warm towels.

- Gently massage breast inward toward nipple to encourage drainage of lymphatic tissue.
- Castor oil pack: soak washcloth in the oil and apply to the breast. Cover cloth with plastic wrap, then hot towels or a heating pad for 20 minutes. Wash the oil off with baking soda solution.
- Carrot or cabbage poultice: grate raw carrot or cabbage and apply directly to the breast. This will help draw out infection.
- Drink 2 quarts of water per day.
- Take vitamin C and echinacea to support your immune system.

Benefits of Breastfeeding

- Nursing contracts your uterus which helps to prevent postpartum bleeding.
- The nutrients in your milk change to the needs of your baby. For example, the nutrient ratio in a woman's milk changes if her baby is premature to accelerate their neurodevelopment. Antibodies are passed in the breast milk, providing a great deal of immunity to your baby during a time when the baby's immune system is developing. This can result in fewer allergies, colds, and ear infections.
- Breastfeeding is particularly protective against some common childhood conditions including eczema, otitis media, and iron-deficiency anemia.
- According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal July (1993), recent studies indicate that one-third to one-half of current infant deaths in North America are because of a failure to breastfeed fully (i.e., to give breast milk exclusively for the first 4 to 6 months of age, then breast milk plus solid food until 12 months).

- Breastfeeding appears to provide substantial protection against breast cancer and osteoporosis. Average annual cost of formula feeding in the first year of life is between \$1,275 and \$3,055. Breastfeeding provides for bonding between mother and child.