

Breastfeeding Hints & Tips

Establishing your Technique:

- Find a comfortable position away from stress to nurse. This allows for an easy let-down.
- Allow the baby to develop its 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.
- 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.
- 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 breastfeeding. Here are some tips that may help:

- A quality diet with high **vitamin C** intake – e.g., oranges, kiwi fruit, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, broccoli, bell peppers, kale, spinach, cabbage, bok choy.
- **Apply warm black tea bags** to the nipples between feedings using a Band-Aid to keep it in place.

- Apply **lanolin cream** on the nipples after feeding – caution for wool allergy.
- **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** out of a capsule directly to the sore nipple.
- Try **different positions** for holding the baby, which helps him or her to grasp the areola and nipple, not just the nipple.
- Don't wash the breasts with soap. **Use only water.**

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 breasts.
- **Apply warm towels.**
- **Gently massage breast** inward toward nipple to encourage drainage of lymphatic tissue.
- **Castor oil pack:** Soak a wash cloth in the oil and apply it to the breast. Cover cloth with plastic wrap, then hot towels for 20 minutes. Wash the oil off with a baking soda solution.
- **Carrot poultice:** Grate a raw carrot and apply directly to the breast. This will help draw out infection.
- **Drink 2L of water** per day.
- **Take vitamin C and Echinacea** to support your immune system.

Dietary Choices:

- A nursing mother needs a total of 1800kcal/day to produce approximately 710ml milk/day and to receive all the nutrients required.
- In the first 6 months this means an additional 500kcal/day; (330kcal from food,

the rest from fat reserved accumulated during pregnancy).

- It is important to remain hydrated whilst breastfeeding. Whilst drinking more fluid does not produce more breast milk it's important to recognise severe fluid restriction may hinder your milk production.
- Low levels of Vitamins B6, B12, A and D and iron are common in lactating mothers.
- Vegetarian/vegan mothers are at risk of additional low calcium levels.
- However, most nutrients can be obtained from well-balanced diet without taking vitamin or mineral supplements.

Nutrient	Food Source
Vitamin B6	Tuna, Turkey, Beef, Chicken, Salmon, Sweet Potato, Sunflower Seeds, Spinach, Banana .
Vitamin B12*	Sardines, Salmon, Tuna, Cod, Lamb, Shrimp, Beef, Egg, Yoghurt, Cheese, Mushrooms. <i>*Vegetarian/Vegan mothers may need regular supplementation of vitamin B12, consult your Health Care Practitioner.</i>
Vitamin A	Sweet Potato, Carrots, Spinach, Kale, Bok Choy, Bell Peppers, Broccoli, Tomatoes, Eggs.
Vitamin D	Salmon, Sardines, Tuna, Eggs, Mushrooms. Sunlight exposure: Fair-skinned women 10-15 mins over face and shoulders/day, darker-skinned women 1hr/day (between March-September)
Iron	Soybeans, Lentils, Spinach, Sesame Seeds, Chickpeas, Olives, Swiss Chard, Tofu, Peas, Kale, Broccoli.
Calcium	Tofu, Sardines, Sesame Seeds, Yoghurt, Spinach, Kale, Sesame Seeds, Sardines, Cheese, Broccoli, Oranges, Fennel.

Foods to Avoid:

- Coffee and chocolate (frequently cause colic) - Caffeine enters breast milk

and may make an infant irritable and wakeful. It can also interfere with the bioavailability of iron present in breast milk lower an infant's iron status. It is recommended mothers limit themselves to 1-2 cups of caffeinated drinks per day.

- Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and brussels sprouts (may cause colic in some babies). Dairy (may cause congestion or rashes - watch for signs and try removing dairy for a few days.)
- Foods with strong spicy flavours, such as garlic or chilli may alter the flavour of breast milk and can aggravate the baby.
- Alcohol inhibits the release of the 'love' hormone oxytocin during breastfeeding. This can reduce the quantity of milk produced so not enough is produced to meet an infant's energy needs so a child will gain less weight. It can also change the taste of the breast milk and make the infant drowsy.

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 anaemia.
- Breastfeeding appears to provide substantial protection against breast cancer and osteoporosis.
- Breastfeeding doesn't work out for every mother, for numerous physical and emotional reasons. There are many support networks and resources to help you feed your child and support their nutritional needs in their early years and beyond. Seek the advice of your midwife and local health care practitioner for support.