Ready, Set, Breastfeed!
Get off to a good start when your baby arrives – learn about breastfeeding now.

Before Your Baby Arrives - Commit to Breastfeed
Talk to your health care provider during pregnancy about:
• Breastfeeding questions and concerns.
• Medication use and safe substitutes.
• Breastfeeding benefits and the risks of not breastfeeding.

Attend classes and events at your WIC clinic or hospital to learn how to:
• Hold and position the baby at the breast.
• Identify an effective latch.
• Recognize hunger cues.
• Safely express and store breast milk.

Tell those important to you that you are going to breastfeed:
• Health care provider.
• WIC clinic.
• Family and friends.
• Employer.
• Child care providers.

When Your Baby is Here - The Early Days
Maintain your milk supply:
• Ask others not to supplement your baby with water, sugar water, formula or other fluids unless medically indicated.
• Delay using bottles or pacifiers until breastfeeding is well established at about 1 month of age.

Bond with your baby:
• Room-in with baby and remain together as much as possible.
• Hold your baby skin-to-skin and breastfeed within the first hour after birth.

Feed your baby:
• Let your baby tell you when it’s time to eat. It’s best not to put your baby on a strict feeding schedule.
• Let your baby finish a feeding.
• Newborns have small stomachs. Feed baby 8-12 times in a 24-hour period.
• Use a breast pump if unable to breastfeed baby or if separated due to medical reasons.

Reach out for help at the hospital and at home:
• Know early signs of breastfeeding problems and when to call for help.
• Contact your support network – your WIC clinic, your health care provider, or a lactation consultant.

Schedule follow-up visits right away:
• With your baby’s health care provider at 3 to 5 days after birth; then again 2 to 3 weeks after birth.
• With your WIC peer counselor and WIC clinic.

When You Are Away from Your Baby – Planning Ahead
Explore breast pump options:
• Find out how and where to rent breast pumps.
• Talk with your local WIC clinic to learn about their breastfeeding support services.
• Talk with your health insurance company and/or your State Medicaid program about breast pumps and breastfeeding benefits.
• Practice using a breast pump and start storing your breast milk a few weeks before being away from your baby, like returning to work or school.
• Help your baby get used to taking expressed milk from a bottle.

Know about breastfeeding laws in your area:
• Federal law requires most employers to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk.
• You may want to learn about your State’s laws. Many States have laws that support breastfeeding moms in public and in the workplace.

Talk to your supervisor and co-workers about:
• Work schedules (part-time, job sharing, telecommuting, flex-time, etc.).
• Break times to express breast milk.
• Private area to express breast milk.
• Whether refrigeration is available for breast milk storage or if you need a small cooler with an ice pack.

Loving Support makes breastfeeding work