

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.



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MAKES BREASTFEEDING WORK