


Frequently Asked Questions on Breastfeeding





I Have Rather Small Breasts. Will I be Able to Produce Enough Breastmilk for My Baby?

Yes, certainly. The amount of milk a mother produces depends on how often & how well she nurses her baby. It doesn't bear any relationship to the size nor the shape of her breasts.

Can a Mother with Small or Flat Nipples Breastfeed?

Most mothers with small, flat or inverted nipples can breastfeed without much problem, as long as the baby is correctly latched on to the breast.

How Should I Care for My Breasts?

- Have a shower everyday. Cleaning nipples before breastfeeding is not necessary.
- Wear a comfortable and supportive bra without wires to avoid pressure on the breasts.

Will I Get Sore Nipples If I Frequently Nurse My Baby?

Breastfeeding is not supposed to hurt, since babies do not just nipple-suck. They have to take a good mouthful of breast to be correctly latched on to the breast. As long as the breastfeeding technique is correct, you will not get sore nipples.

What Should I Do If There is Leaking of Milk?

- You may use nursing pads in your bra, to help absorb the milk.
- If the leaking is quite profuse, fold your arms across your chest and press on your nipples for a while, to stop the leaking temporarily. But to avoid the possibility of blocked duct, it is advisable not to apply pressure to the nipples frequently.

Does a Nursing Mother Need to Eat or Drink More in Order to Make Enough Milk?

There is no need for the nursing mothers to eat or drink more than what is required to satisfy their hunger or thirst. As long as they take a well balanced diet and drink whenever they feel thirsty, most breastfeeding mothers can produce enough milk for more than one baby.

Should I Avoid Any Food During Breastfeeding?

There is no particular food that you should avoid during breastfeeding, as long as the baby is thriving and well.

Can I Drink Alcohol While Breastfeeding?

Taking a small amount of alcohol, if you wish, after nursing your baby is acceptable.

Can I Drink Coffee or Tea While Breastfeeding?

You may drink coffee or tea, as long as you take it within reasonable limit.



How Can I Ensure an Adequate Milk Supply?

The following steps will enable you to have adequate milk supply:

- Start breastfeeding early (within 1 hour after delivery).
- Give frequent exclusive breastfeeding (10-12 times per day). Your baby will gradually need fewer feeds as he grows older.
- Water or formula supplement is not necessary.
- Have a well balanced diet, and drink whenever you feel thirsty.
- Get as much rest as you can to enable yourself to relax during breastfeeding.

How Often Should I Feed my baby?

Babies need to be fed as often as they desire. Breastfed babies need to be fed more often than formula-fed babies, usually up to ~10-12 times per day initially. As the baby gets older, he will adjust himself to take less frequent feeds.

Watch Out for Different Types of Hunger Signals from Your Baby:-

- Rooting reflex (turning his head to reach for the breast, with his mouth opened and his tongue thrusting downward & forward).
- Making sucking motions or putting hand to mouth.
- Crying (a late sign). It is best not to wait until the baby cries.



During the newborn period, your baby might be sleepy & hard to wake. If he doesn't demand to be fed for more than 3 hours after the last feed, make sure you wake him up for a feed.

Do I need to Set a Schedule to Feed My Baby?

You do not need to set a schedule to breastfeed your baby. Watch for your baby's hunger signals, and nurse him as often as he indicates a desire to be fed.

How Long Does a Feed Normally Take?

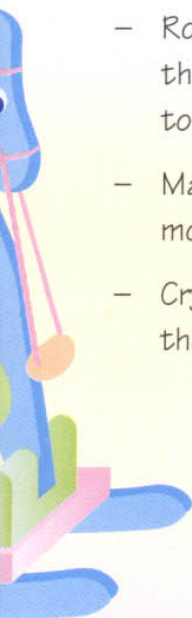
Each & every baby has his own particular pace of feeding, some faster, some slower. As long as the baby is correctly latched on, and has not fallen asleep at your breast, a breastfeed usually takes around half an hour.

How Do I Know That My Baby is Getting Enough Milk?

Breastfed babies should be contented after having a good feed. For exclusively breastfed babies, six or more soaked nappies a day, & a weight gain of 0.5kg per month after the initial physiological weight loss in the first few days, will assure you that they are having enough milk intake.

Should I Also Give Formula Supplements as Well When I Breastfeed My Baby?

Mothers often worry that their babies may not be getting sufficient breastmilk and therefore give formula supplements. However, because a mother's body is designed to produce milk in response to the amount that her baby feeds, giving formula may often REDUCE mother's milk supply. Formula supplements are not usually



necessary for most healthy, full-term breastfed babies. By giving breastfeeding on demand, with correct breastfeeding techniques right after delivery, you can be sure that your baby gets enough breastmilk.

Can I Supplement My Baby with Formula at Night, So That I Can Have a Good Night Sleep?

In order to stimulate & maintain lactation, it is advisable to give breastfeeding at night, while adjusting yourself to sleep or rest whenever your baby sleeps. It is very important to give night feeds, since high levels of "milk producing hormone" is secreted at night.

Can I Breastfeed My Baby When I am ill or Taking Medications?

- You should continue breastfeeding your baby, since breastmilk contains white blood cells and anti-infective factors, which help to protect the baby against infection.
- For most commonly used medications, you do not need to stop breastfeeding, since most of the drugs appear in very small amount in the breastmilk. There are very few medicines that a mother cannot take safely while breastfeeding. So check with your doctor and if necessary, get an alternative medicine which is safer and equally effective.

Can a Mother Who is a Hepatitis B Virus Carrier (HBsAg +) Breastfeed Her Baby?

Infants born to HBsAg+ mothers will receive hepatitis B immunoglobulin and hepatitis B vaccine at birth, followed by 2 more doses of HBV vaccine: at one month and six months. So it is safe for these mothers to breastfeed their babies.

Can Breastfeeding be Continued If My Baby is Jaundiced?

Breastfeeding should be continued if your baby is jaundiced, or if he is under phototherapy. Some breastfed babies may have prolonged jaundice, which is considered normal, as long as he is well. Seek medical advice if in doubt.

What Should I Do for My Sleepy Baby?

Newborn babies usually sleep 18-20 hours per day. You should wake your baby up every 3 hours (including night time), for the feeds. If your baby falls asleep during a feed, you can wake him up by the following measures:-

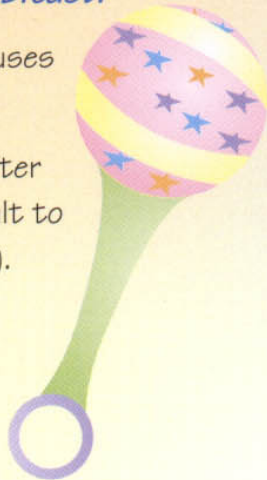
- Unwrap your baby (swaddled babies will feel more sleepy).
- Gently rub his spine, shoulder blades and soles of feet.
- Burp him or change his nappy.



Why Does My Baby Refuse My Breast?

The following are the possible causes of your baby's breast refusal.

- Introducing bottle-feeding after birth, making the baby difficult to breastfeed (nipple confusion).
- Not getting much milk, because of poor attachment or engorgement.
- Baby feeling uncomfortable during feeds, due to poor positioning.
- Mother moving or shaking the breast, which interferes with attachment (latch on).
- Baby is ill, or in pain. (e.g. flu, stuffy nose, ear infection, teething, etc.)
- A change that upsets the baby. (e.g. too many carers, separation from mother, a change in family routine – moving house, visiting relatives, etc.)
- Maternal problems: engorged breasts, mastitis, or maternal illness.



How Do I Know That my Baby's Stools are Normal?

The following are the changes that normally occur in a breastfed baby's stools after delivery.

- Dark greenish stools in the first 1-2 days (meconium).
- Loose yellowish stools (8-12 times per day), especially in the early days after birth.



- Soft stools (e.g. once every few days) as the breastfed baby gets older.

Points to Note:-

- Frequent watery, smelly stools with no substance is a sign of diarrhoea, which is different from loose yellowish stools with milk-curd like substances, normally found in breastfed babies.
- If your baby has foul smelling watery stools with no substance, or stools with mucus or blood, keep the diaper and consult your doctor immediately.



When Should I Introduce Solids to my Baby?

Breastmilk contains all the nutrients that meet the baby's needs for the first 6 months of life. So, in addition to breastfeeding, your baby should start having solids at around 6 months of age.

When Should I Stop Breastfeeding?

There is no such rule as a "right" time to stop breastfeeding. Breastmilk continues to provide nutritional & psychological benefits for the baby even after the age of 6 months. You can continue to breastfeed as long as you & your baby are happy to do so. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed for the first six months, with continued breastfeeding and appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age or beyond.

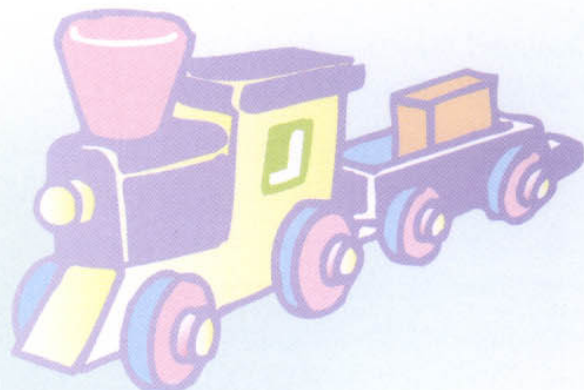
Would I be Able to Enjoy a Normal Sex Life if I Breastfeed?

The following points can help you to maintain your normal sex life while you breastfeed your baby.

- Mutual understanding, tender loving care, support and help to each other are the cornerstones to maintaining a close loving relationship between the couple.
- Should you experience pain or discomfort during intercourse, you can alleviate the symptoms by using water soluble lubricants (e.g. KY jelly).
- Feeding your baby beforehand can abate the chance of leaking of milk that normally occurs during sexual activity. Pressing the nipples can also stop leaking of milk.

Will Breastfeeding Cause ill Effect on the Baby or Fetus If I Get Pregnant?

- If the mother and child desire, breastfeeding can still continue without ill effect on the fetus.
- Painless uterine contractions during feeding will not affect the fetus.
- Some babies may wean by themselves when the mother gets pregnant again.



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Where Can I Seek Advice?

You may still need skilled help and advice during the early weeks, before breastfeeding is established.

- Skilled help and advice can be obtained from a nearby Maternal and Child Health Centre.
- You can also ring one of the breastfeeding hotlines:-

**Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative
Hong Kong Association**
2838 7727 9:00 am to 9:00pm

Family Health Service, Department of Health
2961 8868 Monday to Friday
9:00 am to 5:00pm
Saturday
9:00 am to 1:00pm

Hong Kong Breastfeeding Mothers' Association
2540 3282

La Leche League, Hong Kong
2548 7636 24 hours

Prince of Wales Hospital
2632 3002 24 hours Voice Mail

Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital
2595 6813 Monday to Friday
2:00pm to 3:30pm
(for clients of PYNEH only)

Queen Elizabeth Hospital
2958 6565 Monday to Friday
2:30pm to 4:40pm

Tsan Yuk Hospital
Infolink 2549 1112 Press '1'

Tuen Mun Hospital
2468 5702 9:00am to 9:00pm
2468 5623
(for clients of Tuen Mun Hospital only)

United Christian Hospital
2346 9995 24 hours
(for clients of United Christian Hospital only)
