Breastfeeding

Is my baby getting enough milk?

Remember...

- Your baby is getting enough milk when he or she:
  - has bright eyes, a moist mouth and good colour.
  - wees and poos regularly
  - gains weight
  - is content after feeding.
- Don't feed on schedule. Feed according to need.
- Your baby may feed more often during growth spurts.
- The more you feed, the more milk you make.

How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?

- After your baby is 3–4 days old, he or she should have at least 6–8 wet cloth nappies or 5–7 disposable nappies in 24 hours.
- Breastfed babies are rarely constipated, so a dirty nappy can occur after each feed. Typical breastfed babies' bowel motions are a loose, mustard yellow but can sometimes be green or orange. Unlike formula fed babies, breastfed babies may not have a bowel action every day. If you are concerned, talk to a trained health professional. None of these changes are a problem in a healthy breastfed baby. Breastfed babies' bowel motions will be different to the bowel motions of formula fed babies. As your baby gets older, dirty nappies can occur less frequently.
- Your baby has bright eyes, a moist mouth and good colour.
- Your baby is mostly contented after feeding. Most babies will have an unsettled period somewhere in the day. This should not be misinterpreted as running out of milk at the end of the day.
- Your baby's weight gain is going well. Babies lose weight shortly after they are born. They start to regain this weight by day 4–6 and should have regained their birth weight by two weeks. After this, check your baby's growth regularly and make sure it is recorded on the growth chart in your baby's Personal Health Record book. The fact that your baby's growth follows the general pattern or curve of the graph is the most important thing. A baby who is gaining weight is getting enough breastmilk. A judgment on your baby's growth is best made only after a series of measurements. A one-off unusual measure is not usually cause for concern if your baby is contented and healthy. Check the accuracy of measurements, use the same scales all the time and always weigh without clothes and nappy (or always with a dry nappy).

Tips

- Your breasts may soften once your body has settled into breastfeeding. This does not necessarily mean you have a low supply. Your milk supply has settled to your baby's needs.
- Breast size has no relationship to milk production.
- Take care of yourself. Make sure you eat good healthy food and drink plenty of water.
- Your baby can't tell the time yet. In the first months of life, babies don't always become hungry at the same time each day. Don't feed on a schedule – feed according to need.
- Breasts respond to frequent stimulation by producing more milk. If your baby is sucking on a dummy or a bottle, they won't feed from you as often and your supply will decrease.
- Your baby will want to feed more often during growth spurts.
- How often your baby needs to feed and how long they take to feed differs a lot from one baby to the next.
- The more you feed, the more milk you make.

Queensland Government
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