



Breastfeeding and your baby





Welcome to parenthood, both an exciting and challenging new chapter of life. You are about to experience every possible emotion –unbelievable joy, pride, delight, fulfilment, as well as frustration, anxiety, guilt and anger... all possibly in the space of a minute.

While becoming a mum is life-changing, it's not always easy. Breastfeeding is a classic example. Just because it's natural, doesn't mean it comes naturally to everyone. With the right help and support though, most women will be able to breastfeed their baby.

So why breastfeed in the first place?

The answer of course, is that little miracle which has just turned your life upside down. If you breastfeed, you are giving your bub the best possible start in life. Breastfeeding has so many benefits for both you and your baby, so it's no wonder most new mums in Queensland give it a go.



Breastfeeding Benefits

Benefits for bub

The research is in and it's good news. It has been scientifically proven that if you breastfeed, you'll help protect your baby against a range of illnesses, including:

- gastro-intestinal infections
- chest infections
- urine infections
- ear infections
- diabetes
- obesity
- asthma
- eczema.

Research also indicates that breastfeeding can help protect your baby from:

- SIDS
- childhood leukaemias
- heart disease
- inflammatory bowel disease
- coeliac disease.

Breastfeeding also gives your baby a place to feel safe and to be comforted – a special bonding experience for both you and your baby. There is no need to limit the amount of breastfeeds your baby has or worry about the number of hours between feeds. Your breasts are ready for your baby to feed anytime, anywhere, as often as your baby needs and will produce the amount of milk your baby needs.

Benefits for mum

Then there's your own health to consider. Breastfeeding isn't only good for your baby, it's good for you too. Not only will your body get over the birth quicker, it will help protect you from breast cancer, ovarian cancer and osteoporosis. If you develop diabetes during your pregnancy it is especially important to breastfeed as it can reduce your chance of type 2 diabetes later in life. Breastfeeding will save your family money and you don't have to worry about preparing bottles every time you take bub out. Breastfeeding also releases hormones

that make you feel relaxed and help you sleep easier.

Breastfeed for 12 months and you'll save over \$1000 on formula alone.

Tips

- All babies will have unsettled times no matter how they feed.
- Formula-fed babies are no more likely to sleep through than breastfed babies.
- Dads can bond with baby by bathing, burping and settling (see page 35).



Some things you should know about breastfeeding

It doesn't matter what size your breasts or nipples are, most mums will be able to breastfeed with a bit of practice and the right support.

Some mums will take to breastfeeding like a duck to water. If you are not one of them, don't give up. Breastfeeding is a learnt skill for you and your baby, you'll need someone to show you how to breastfeed correctly, including recognising your baby's feeding cues. It may seem hard at first, but with the right help and a bit of practice, it will get easier. Trust your instinct and follow your baby's lead.

You'll probably be given heaps of advice, which can be helpful, but if you feel unsure about anything check that it's correct. Every woman is different, and what works for some may not work for others. Remember, no one knows your baby like you!

Here's what some mothers who have breastfed think you should know:

"It is a learnt skill, so use the midwives' experience whilst in hospital and the Australian Breastfeeding Association's after."

"It can be hard work and you need to prepare yourself for the fact that it might not come naturally."

"The skin-to-skin contact of breastfeeding really helped me bond with my baby while she was in the preemie ward."

"If you have found a routine, attachment, anything that works, don't let people's opinions give you doubts so you change a good thing."

"It will seem like your baby is feeding a lot in those first few weeks. It's perfectly normal, just go with it. Don't look at the clock."

"It hurts sometimes, especially in the first days. But it will get better."

"Take people up on offers to help. A newborn is tiring, regardless of how it is fed."

"If you are worried about milk supply, please just live by this mantra: The more bubby sucks, the more milk is made."

"Every time you offer a bottle of formula, your supply will drop, unless you express the feed. If baby is crying and you are not around or asleep, ask family or friends to give them a cuddle or a bath instead."

"Be careful with the breast pump. My boobs were very engorged so I started pumping to relieve the pressure. I didn't know that this temporary relief was actually making me make MORE milk – and just making the problem worse."



Ready to give it a go?

Even though breastfeeding is natural, most mums and babies need help, even if mum has breastfed before. Take the midwife up on her offer to help you attach your baby for your first feed (and second, third and fourth feed... however long it takes until you feel confident). Ask the midwife to put your baby skin-to-skin on your chest as soon as possible after birth, which promotes bonding and helps your body relax and 'let down' your breastmilk. Keep baby there until they start searching for a feed. Delay weighing, bathing or passing baby around until after the first feed.

Attachment shouldn't hurt. If it does, take your baby off the breast and try again. Your baby won't starve and you will save yourself from sore, cracked nipples down the line.

How to get bub onto your breast

Find a comfy spot where you can sit and relax, as lying down to feed can be a bit tricky at first. If you like, have a firm cushion to rest your baby or arm on. Have anything you might need close to hand – phone, remote control, magazines or book, glass of water – you're going to be here for a little while.

Hold your unwrapped baby so that his or her head and body are in a straight line with your hands supporting the neck (not the head) behind the shoulders. Then gently

turn your baby on to his or her side so bub's body is facing your breast. Your baby may pop onto your breast and attach or may need guidance.

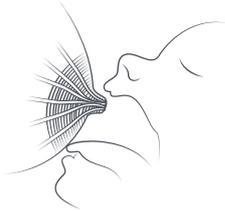
Get your baby to open his or her mouth as wide as possible, as you'll need to get both your nipple and areola (the dark bit around your nipple) into bub's mouth. A little stroke on baby's upper lip with your nipple should get bub to open up.

When baby's chin comes in contact with the breast, most babies will open their mouth and move forward onto the breast by themselves. If this does not happen, mum can gently bring baby towards the breast (remember it's always baby to breast, not breast to baby). You are aiming to bring baby's nose up to your nipple. Baby should

then tilt his or her head back slightly so they can get a good mouthful of breast. When baby is correctly attached, the nose will be level with your nipple, but clear of your breast so he or she can still breathe.

If it's hurting, baby is latching on to the nipple and not the breast. Slide your finger into the side of baby's mouth to break the latch and try again. And again. And again. And again if need be. Ask your midwife or clinic nurse for help as often as you need it.

Baby will usually come off the breast by him or herself when full, however, some don't. If baby appears to have stopped feeding, but does not come off, you can use your finger in the side of baby's mouth to detach. Burp baby and then offer the other breast. If baby does not want to drink, that's fine.



Approaching attachment: Baby has wide gape with tongue down and forward. Nipple is aimed at the roof of baby's mouth, with first point of contact being baby's lower jaw or chin on the areola, well away from the nipple.



Optimal attachment: Baby draws nipple and breast tissue back to the soft palate. Tongue is forward over gums, lower lip rolled out, chin against breast. Jaws are positioned well over the ducts and can compress them efficiently.

Adapted and updated by Australian Breastfeeding Association 2007, with permission, from article by Ros Escott. Breastfeeding Review, May 1989.

How do you know if your baby is attached properly?

- It may be uncomfortable at first, but it should not be painful, if it is, take baby off and start again. You may experience some tingling in your breast, this is a normal feeling as your milk is being 'let-down'. Get help if the pain continues.
- Your baby will have a large mouthful of breast, not just the nipple.
- Baby's lips will be slightly curled out.
- Baby's chin will be touching your breast, while the nose will be clear.
- You might hear your baby gulp or swallow, this can be pretty cute.

How can you tell if breastfeeding is going well?

- Your breasts and nipples will not be sore.
- Your baby is relaxed and content after most feeds.
- Your baby manages to attach easily at most feeds.
- Your baby is healthy and gaining weight.
- Your baby has at least six wet nappies a day.

- Your baby's poo changes in colour, frequency and consistency over the first week. He or she can go a week without doing one after six weeks of age.

Early signs that your baby is hungry may include:

- Moving head from side-to-side as if looking for your breast.
- Sucking fist, fingers or thumbs.
- Turning face into your breast.

Late signs that your baby is hungry may include:

- Moving head frantically from side-to-side.
- Crying – once your baby is crying it can be hard to get him or her to feed properly.

How often should you feed your baby?

The simple answer is whenever baby is hungry or seeking comfort. It's normal for newborns to feed eight to twelve times in 24 hours. Expect to be tired, you are going through a life-changing experience. If friends volunteer to cook or clean for you, take them up on it. The good news is there is light at the end of the tunnel, it does get easier. As your baby gets bigger, he or she will need fewer feeds. However, during your baby's growth and development, there will be times when your baby will want to feed a lot more than usual, especially in the late afternoon and early evening. This 'cluster' feeding is very normal.

How long does a feed take?

Again, your baby will determine this. Some will gulp a full feed down in just 10 minutes. Others may take 50 minutes a feed. When baby has had enough, he or she will stop sucking and come off the breast by him or herself or fall asleep. If you notice that baby's jaw isn't really moving anymore, you can detach baby by inserting a finger into the side of bub's mouth to break the seal.

Does baby need one breast or two?

That depends on how hungry your baby is. It is always worth offering both, and for some feeds, baby might take both breasts. For other feeds, one breast may be enough. Make sure baby finishes one breast before offering the other. This will ensure that baby feeds well and will help with your breastmilk supply. If baby only takes one breast, remember to offer the other breast at the next feed. Don't get too worried about remembering which side you need to feed off next, as long as you're feeding on both sides. If you want to remind yourself which side baby last fed on you could use a bangle or a wristband.

Advanced moves

Once you've mastered attachment, you can experiment to find the position and hold that suits you and baby best. Some mums like to feed lying down in bed (make sure you don't fall asleep as this can be dangerous for baby). Others like putting baby in a sling so they feed on the move.

It is important that baby stays with you while in hospital, so you can get to know each other before going home.



The first weeks

The first day

Most babies are awake for the first few hours after birth, they will then usually be sleepy for the next 24 hours and only have a couple of breastfeeds. Baby will usually only wee once and do a couple of black tarry poos. It's a good day for mums to try to get some rest after the birth.

The second day

On the second day babies will wake up cranky, unsettled and they'll seem to want to breastfeed constantly. You're only producing colostrum (a nutrient-rich yellow milk) at this stage, so the more you breast feed the quicker your mature milk will come in. Your hormones will increase today, which causes your nipples to be more sensitive. Mums often need lots of help and support on the second day after baby is born. Baby's poos are starting to go green and they will do a couple more wees.

The third day

For most mums this is the day the mature milk comes in. The breasts are full, with baby feeding a lot less often, and for shorter times, so things often feel a little better today after the unsettled second day. Baby's poos today start to go yellow and can be a bit runny. They are also starting to do more wees (five to six is normal).

Baby usually gets weighed today and can lose up to 10% of their birth weight (this is normal).

Tips for the first weeks:

- Hunger signs – opening mouth, turning head, sucking hands and crying.
- Eight to twelve feeds a day is normal, offer both sides.
- More breastfeeds mean you'll produce more milk.
- Breastfeeding can be uncomfortable at first, but it will get easier.

- Breastfeeding shouldn't be painful, get help if it is (see page 19)
- Most babies have unsettled times each day, it's all new to them too.
- Growth spurts are common, baby will want to feed more.
- Your baby may learn how to breastfeed more quickly if he or she is not given dummies or bottle teats until feeding is going well and baby is about 4 weeks old.
- Family and friends can help too, just let them know what you really need.
- Make some time for yourself – a happy mum means a happy baby.
- Remember, it will get easier.

It's normal to need some help or advice.

Call or text 'breastfeeding' to 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

For more information visit www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding



Common feeding problems and solutions

Many mums will at some time encounter difficulties with breastfeeding, but rest assured there's plenty of help available. Your midwife or a lactation consultant will be happy to help and you can always call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for advice too. Go to page 19 of this guide for some more options.

I don't think I'm producing enough milk

Your body is an amazing machine and produces as much milk as your baby requires. It is very rare for a woman not to be able to produce enough milk. Your baby is getting enough milk if they:

- Have six heavily wet nappies a day.
- Are passing soft, mustard-coloured poo.
- Look bright-eyed, alert, healthy and have good skin colour.
- Are feeding around eight to twelve times a day, depending on baby's age and storage capacity of your breasts.

- Are gaining weight over time. Baby should be back to his or her birth weight by two weeks of age.

If you do want to increase your milk supply follow some of this advice:

- Increase the frequency of feeds. The more baby feeds, the more milk you will make.
- Eat a variety of health foods throughout the day and stay hydrated (water is best).
- Unless there is a medical reason, avoid supplementing baby's feeds with formula as the less baby drinks from you, the less milk you will produce.
- Try not to use a dummy, they can reduce breastfeeds and breastmilk production. Breastfeeding will also comfort baby.
- Relax when you breastfeed. Find a quiet spot and turn the phone off.
- Get more sleep (possibly wishful thinking). Have a nap when baby naps, or just relax with a book or walk in the garden.

My breasts are swollen!

In that first week when your milk comes in, your breasts can feel as hard as rocks. Don't worry, the swelling and tenderness usually go away in a day or two.

In the meantime:

- Wear a supportive, well-fitting bra (no underwire).
- Breastfeed often – eight to twelve times in 24 hours.
- Apply cold packs (heat will make it worse) to your breasts after each feed.
- Hand express a small amount for your comfort before or after a feed.
- If breasts are hard and baby cannot attach, you may be engorged and need to seek help. Contact your midwife, a lactation consultant or call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for advice. Page 19 of this guide also has other options for seeking help.

My nipples are sore

Don't ignore sore nipples, it is one of the most common reasons women are unable to continue breastfeeding. If your nipples hurt throughout the feed, speak to a midwife, lactation consultant, child health nurse or GP as soon as possible (page 19 of this guide has options on where to find help). Chances are you just need to make a few adjustments to your breastfeeding technique. Sore or cracked nipples usually mean baby is not attaching properly.

There can be other less common reasons for breastfeeding to hurt. If your nipples are sore your midwife, child health nurse or GP will check for the cause and provide you with advice.

Things to do if your nipples are sore

- See a midwife, lactation consultant, child health nurse or GP straight away. Chances are it's an attachment issue. They'll make sure baby is latching on correctly.

- If your nipples become shiny, very red and you develop flu-like symptoms, you may have an infection. See your doctor.
- Try different feeding positions.
- Don't pull baby off your breast or you'll stretch your nipples. Insert your finger into the side of baby's mouth to break the suction seal.
- Try smearing expressed breastmilk on your nipples after each feed and allow to air dry. Your breastmilk contains healing properties you can't buy in a shop.
- Wear breathable, natural fabrics, change your breast pads often and avoid ones with plastic liners.
- Nipple shields are used occasionally to assist with breastfeeding problems, but only under the guidance of a health professional.

Should I breastfeed with sore nipples?

If your nipples are sore and you dread breastfeeding, try gently hand expressing for a few feeds to allow your nipples to heal. Usually this is not needed as sore nipples can often be helped by changing baby's feeding position and checking baby's attachment.

I think I have mastitis

If your breasts feel swollen, red, lumpy and you feel like you have flu-like symptoms, chances are you have mastitis. Mastitis occurs when blocked milk ducts in your breast become inflamed or infected. You'll need to see your doctor immediately so they can assess the need to prescribe antibiotics and pain relief. Whatever you do, don't ignore it as it can lead to an abscess in your breast. It is safe and important to feed your baby when you have mastitis. Yes it will hurt, but it will actually help your breasts heal, and don't worry, the milk is safe for baby.

How can I avoid it?

The more rundown you are, the more prone to infection you become. Being a new mum is exhausting, so try to get plenty of rest and eat healthy food to keep your body strong.

Blocked milk ducts feel like a lump in your breast. They can also feel hot and achy to touch, and may look a little red. If you think you notice some, try and get rid of them before they become infected by:

- Applying heat to your breasts (a heat pack or a warm shower will do the trick) before you feed.
- Gently massaging any lumps in your breasts as you breastfeed or have a shower. Massage gently in a circular motion.
- Continue to demand feed baby on both breasts, and avoid dummies and bottle feeds.
- Applying a cold pack to your breasts after a feed.
- Ensuring your bra fits well and doesn't leave pressure marks. Don't wear it while you sleep.
- Change breast pads regularly.

It's common to have some problems along the way but most of these can be overcome with the right advice. Seek help from a health professional sooner rather than later.



Where to find help

Breastfeeding is something that mums and babies need to learn together, so don't be afraid to ask for help if you are finding it difficult. Help is available around the clock, through a variety of associations, websites and people. Preparing yourself and seeking advice early can prevent common breastfeeding problems.

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

13 HEALTH is a telephone helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the cost of a local call. Qualified child health nurses and lactation consultants are available to provide you with breastfeeding advice and support.

Call or text 'breastfeeding' to 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Child Health Centres

Your local community nurse is there to help you with every aspect of caring for your new baby, including breastfeeding. They are an amazing source of knowledge and this service is free.

To find your local Child Health Centre you can:

- call the Health and Community Services information line on (07) 3837 5986
- call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- visit www.health.qld.gov.au/cchs and use the 'Where is your nearest Child Health Clinic?' link
- ask at your local maternity hospital.

Australian Breastfeeding Association helpline

Trained, volunteer mums are available to help you with your breastfeeding issues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They've been there and done that, so can offer some really valuable information.

Phone 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268).

Lactation Consultants of Australia and New Zealand (LCANZ)

A lactation consultant is like a breastfeeding personal trainer. These health professionals are trained to assist you with every aspect of breastfeeding and will help you solve any problem you might have. They work out of private clinics, maternity hospitals, health centres and they make home visits. You can see

them for free in some public hospitals and child health clinics, otherwise a private consultation is around \$80 to \$100 (rebates may apply).

To find an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) near you, visit the LCANZ website (www.lcanz.org) and look under 'Find a lactation consultant'.

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) can also help find a lactation consultant in your area.

Breastfeeding courses and information sessions

Before you give birth, you can do an Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) course that will teach you breastfeeding techniques and how to care for your newborn. You can contact the ABA on:

- (07) 3324 0577
- 1800 686 268
- or by visiting www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Many maternity hospitals also offer antenatal classes, which cover breastfeeding. Check with your local antenatal clinic.



General Practitioners (GPs)

Your GP is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to caring for your family. Some doctors will have more experience than others when it comes to managing breastfeeding, but all will be able to refer you to the best person if they are unable to help.

Mothers' groups and playgroups

It's always comforting to know you are not the only one having problems. Your fellow mums can be a great support network (just ignore the one who says her angel slept through the night from 5 weeks, she's probably exaggerating). At the very least, you and baby will make new friends.

A number of services organise these groups. Your local child health service, maternity hospital or ABA may be able to introduce you to a mothers' group in your area. To find your local playgroup call 1800 171 882 or visit www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/qld

Other support networks

Having a baby is a life-changing event and coping with the day-to-day stress of a newborn can lead to depression in some mums during this time. Postnatal depression affects almost 16 percent of Australian women. If you are feeling unable to cope with everyday tasks, you may need to seek help. The beyondblue website (www.beyondblue.org.au) has information about recognising symptoms, how to help someone and how to stay well. The beyondblue info line 1300 224 636 can provide information and referral to relevant services.

Books and brochures

For more information on different aspects of breastfeeding, check out the pamphlets at your local antenatal clinic and the Child Health Information booklet, which all new parents are given in their baby's personal health record (red book). You can also buy helpful books online at www.mothersdirect.com.au, which also sells other useful breastfeeding items including breast pumps.

Websites

Some of the sites that offer good breastfeeding advice are:

www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding

www.breastfeeding.asn.au (ABA website)

www.babycenter.com.au

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Family and friends can be great, but just remember they don't always know what you really need. And make some time for yourself – a happy mum means a happy baby.



Express yourself

Believe it or not, you can have a social and work life, and still breastfeed for as long as you want. The trick is to learn how to express your breastmilk. It may seem strange but it enables you to go out or go back to work. It's also a useful tool to help overcome some breastfeeding problems.

Getting your breastmilk into a bottle

Expressing can be as simple and easy as standing over a bowl, while you gently massage your milk into it. However, if you are going to be doing it regularly, it's worth buying an inexpensive manual pump that will speed up the process.

You can also hire electric breast pumps from many pharmacies, your local maternity hospital or the ABA. Local ABA groups all over Queensland hire pumps, and so does the Brisbane Mothers Direct store ((07)3847 5187). There are all sorts of pumps out there. Phoning the ABA helpline will put you in touch with your local breast pump hiring officer, but will also help you work out which pump might suit you best. If you decide to buy one, visit www.mothersdirect.com.au and click on 'Breast Pumps'.

For information on pumps, and how to manually express and store your milk, refer to the Child Health Information booklet located in your baby's red Personal Health Record.

Expressing while at work

By expressing at work, you can ensure your baby still gets all the health benefits of breast milk.

By law, your employer is obliged to 'reasonably accommodate' your breastfeeding. Before you go back, let them know you'll need a private room with a comfy chair where you can express, and somewhere to store your equipment. If possible, try to express at the times you'd normally feed your baby. Make sure your workplace has a fridge where you can store your milk, and make sure you label it clearly!

For tips on how to raise breastfeeding with your employer, visit www.breastfeedingfriendly.com.au and click on 'For Mothers' or visit www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding and click on 'Work and breastfeeding'.



Adapting breastfeeding to your lifestyle

Going out with baby

In the early days, you may feel breastfeeding is consuming all of your time. The reality is, however, it actually gives you more freedom and makes getting out and about easier. There are no bottles and containers to carry around, and you don't have to try find somewhere to heat up bottles. The big department stores and shopping centres all have parenting rooms. An artfully draped baby blanket allows you to feed in privacy. And if you're flying, breastfeeding during take-off and landing ensures baby (and your fellow passengers) stay happy.

Travelling without baby

To keep your milk supply up, express at the times you would normally feed your baby. Baby can still enjoy breastmilk while you are away if you stockpile expressed milk in your freezer. If you are having problems producing enough, contact an expert for some advice.

Physical activity and sport

Not only is physical activity great for your health, it will feel wonderful to have time to yourself. Don't push yourself too hard at first and remember to drink enough water before, during and after physical activity to quench thirst.

Having a drink or two

Alcohol can affect breastmilk production and baby's development. Because it is unknown how much alcohol is safe to drink when breastfeeding, it is recommended not to drink any alcohol.

While alcohol is in your bloodstream it is also in your breastmilk. There are safer ways to fit in the occasional drink. If you have a special occasion and want to drink alcohol, plan ahead to express and stockpile your breastmilk. If you simply want the occasional glass of wine at night, time it for your baby's long sleep and feed bub before you drink.

For every standard drink you have, wait two hours before breastfeeding (a standard drink equals 100ml of wine, 285ml of beer or 30ml of spirits).

Smoking

While parents should be encouraged to stop or reduce smoking, women who do choose to smoke can still breastfeed. In fact the health benefits of breastfeeding are especially important for these babies as it can reduce some of the health risks of smoke exposure, such as the chance of SIDS. For information about quitting or using Nicotine Replacement Therapy (patches and gum) while breastfeeding speak to a health professional or call 13QUIT (13 78 48).

Dieting

Research shows you can safely lose 0.5kg a week without affecting your baby's health, if you maintain a balanced diet. You put the weight on over nine months, so give yourself nine months to take it off.

Sex

After having baby at your breasts all day, you mightn't want your partner touching them. This is a very common and normal response. Gently let your partner know how you feel beforehand. If you find your breasts leak during sex, consider expressing.

Leaky breasts

In the early days, if you miss a feed or expressing session, your breasts can start to leak. Breast pads, available from pharmacies and supermarkets, can save you from ending up with wet stains on your T-shirt.





Some breastfeeding myths and the real stories behind them

My mum couldn't breastfeed so I probably can't either.

Sadly, many mums in the past were not given the right information and support to be able to breastfeed their babies. We know that most mums are able to breastfeed if they are given that information and support.

My partner won't bond with the baby if he can't feed her.

Dads can still have a special relationship with their baby if their partner is breastfeeding. This includes bathing, burping and settling. See page 35 of this guide for some other ideas on how dad can be involved and help.

The baby will be clingy and I won't be able to leave him or her anywhere.

Babies do not have the ability to be manipulative, and breastfeeding doesn't make them only dependent on their mum

for comfort. As they develop trusting relationships, they will grow to be happy and independent.

Breastfeeding is really painful, and it's usual to get cracked and grazed nipples.

Breastfeeding can be uncomfortable when starting out, but it does get better. If it is really painful, or you have damaged nipples, get some help because this is not normal.

You can't tell how much milk the baby is getting when you breastfeed, but you can if you bottle-feed.

Knowing if baby is getting enough milk is a common worry for mums. If the baby is weeing, pooing and gaining weight, most mums can be reassured that the baby is getting enough breastmilk.

Breastfeeding mums should be careful not to eat certain foods that will give the baby wind or colic.

Breastfeeding mums should eat a healthy diet from all of the five food groups. There are no specific foods breastfeeding mums should avoid.

Drinking more fluids (like milk or water) will make more breastmilk.

While breastfeeding mums need extra fluid (at least 700 mls a day) to maintain good health, increasing fluid intake does not increase the amount of breastmilk made.

Mums who breastfeed their babies end up with saggy breasts.

Breasts sag because during pregnancy, as the breasts grow, the ligaments that support them become stretched. Breastfeeding is not the cause. The best advice is to get professionally fitted for a bra to provide support.



Introduce solids at around six months. Solids should supplement breastfeeding and not replace it - together after 6 months they provide baby with all the nutrients they need.

Introducing solids

Up until six months of age, a baby's digestive system is not developed enough to cope with solid food. Breastmilk is all the food and drink your baby needs.

At around six months, you can start introducing solid foods. Begin with iron-rich foods, followed by other foods in any order that suits your baby. Start off with pureed foods, moving to lumpy, and then on to normal textures by 12 months. Until baby is eating from a wide range of foods it's best to breastfeed before a meal to ensure all bub's nutritional needs are being met.

Solids and breastfeeding together after 6 months provides baby with all the nutrients they need. For your baby and you to enjoy all the benefits breastfeeding can bring, see if you can do it for 12 months or more.

Why wait until six months?

The current recommendation in Australia is to introduce solids at around six months. Introducing solids before then increases the risk of gut and chest infections, it can reduce the intake of nutrients supplied through breastmilk, which can decrease

growth and delay development. In addition to age, babies need to show signs of readiness to start solids (i.e. sit up and hold their head steady, open their mouth when food is offered, and swallow instead of suck). Despite often being given as a reason to start, solids do not make babies sleep better.

Combining solids and breastfeeding

When starting solids, food should be offered after a breastfeed, when your baby is more settled. Given that breastmilk supplies around half a baby's nutritional needs up to the first year, it is important to combine the two. Once baby is eating a variety of foods two to three times a day, breastfeed after and between each meal.

First foods

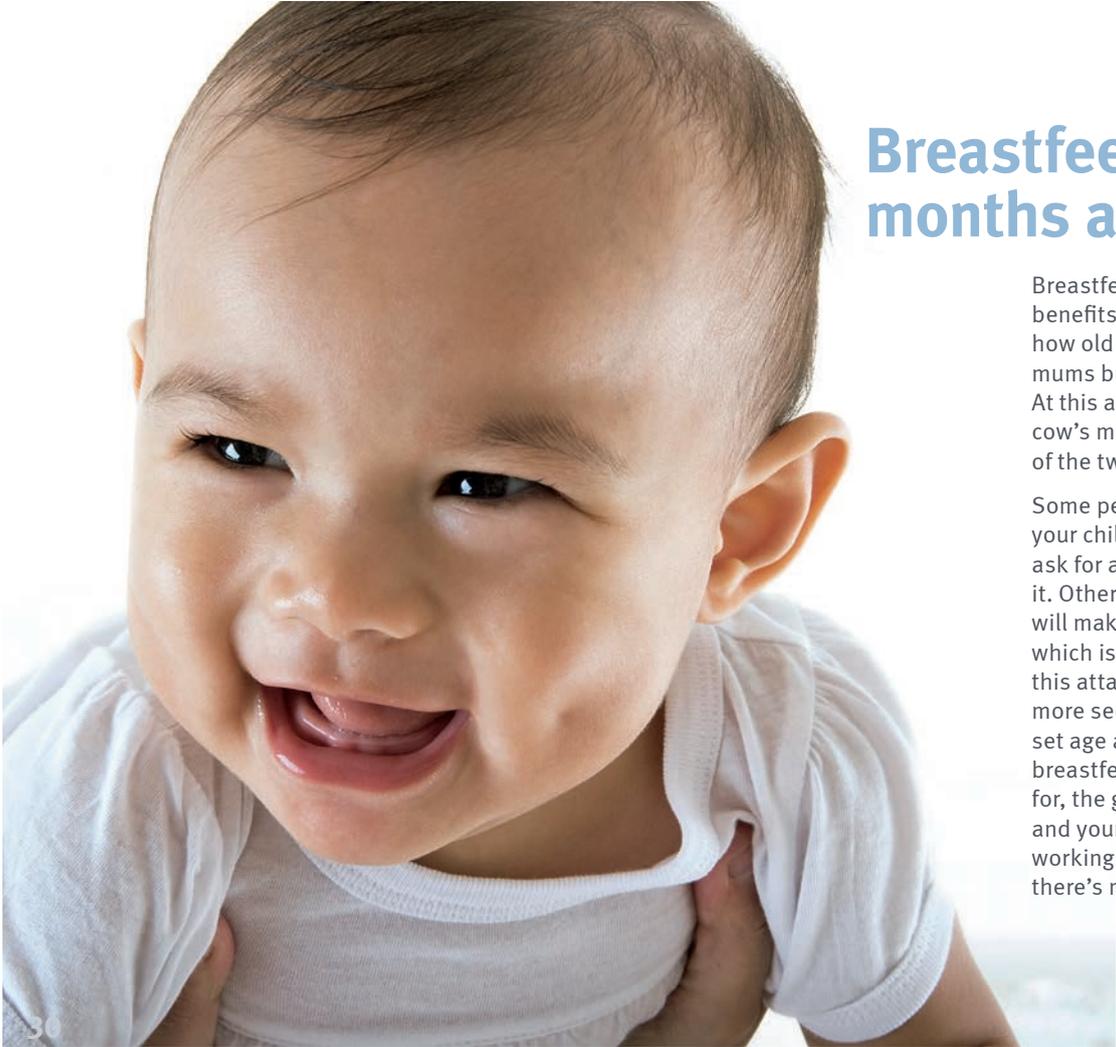
Solids are introduced around six months to meet your baby's increased nutritional needs (especially for iron) and to support healthy growth and development. Suitable first foods high in iron include baby rice

cereal with added iron or pureed meat. Pureed vegetables, fruits and yogurt or custard should follow, but remember not to add sugar, honey or salt. If your baby refuses food, don't worry and try again in a day or two. It can take up to 15 times before babies will accept a new food – be patient.

More information on starting solids can be found in the Child Health Information booklet in your baby's red Personal Health Record or by contacting 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Looking after baby's teeth

Baby's teeth should be brushed with a soft baby toothbrush as soon as they appear. Start brushing with a small amount of children's low fluoride toothpaste from 6 months in non-fluoridated areas, and after 18 months in fluoridated areas, this will reduce the chance of tooth decay.



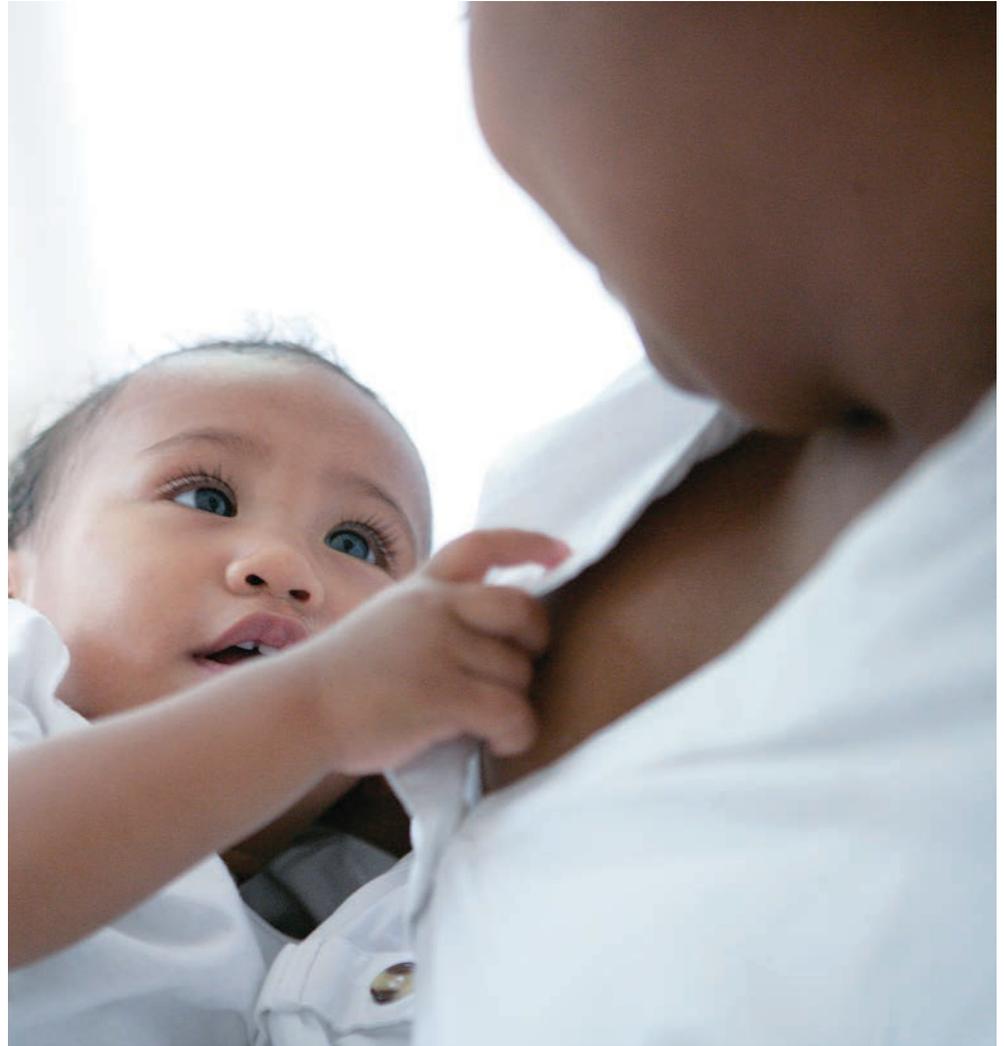
Breastfeeding for 12 months and beyond

Breastfeeding has health and other benefits for mum and bub regardless of how old baby is. It is recommended that mums breastfeed for at least 12 months. At this age baby can then switch straight to cow's milk in a cup or have a combination of the two.

Some people believe that as soon as your child has teeth, start solids or can ask for a breastfeed, they should be off it. Others feel breastfeeding for too long will make kids more dependent or clingy, which is opposite to the evidence that this attachment actually makes them more secure and independent. There's no set age at which your child should stop breastfeeding. The longer you breastfeed for, the greater the benefits are for both you and your baby. So if breastfeeding is still working for you and bub after 12 months there's no reason to stop.

Breastfeeding in public

Using a baby blanket draped over your shoulder or investing in a nursing top that will allow discrete feeding can make it more comfortable for you. For mums that aren't comfortable breastfeeding in public, most large shopping centres now have parent rooms with areas for breastfeeding. It is perfectly acceptable to breastfeed in public, and it is actually against the law for people or businesses to ask you to stop or go somewhere else. Talk with other breastfeeding mums or your health worker to get some further hints. With time and practice, you will find the confidence to breastfeed your baby wherever you are.





When you are not sure if breastfeeding is for you

Breastmilk is important for your baby, however some mums can struggle to keep up with their baby's needs, and other mums aren't sure that breastfeeding is right for them.

How to combine breastfeeding and formula feeding

Any breastmilk, no matter how much or how it is given, has benefits for you and your baby. If you cannot, or choose not to, give your baby only breastmilk, here are some suggestions to help you combine breastfeeding with formula feeding:

- If you can, always breastfeed first before giving formula.
- If you cannot express enough for a feed, breastmilk can be combined with formula in the same bottle.
- Any breastmilk added into formula gives it a 'boost', even if it is only a few drops.
- If you choose to give the whole feed by a bottle (whether it is all expressed breastmilk or combined breastmilk and formula), you can still put your baby to

the breast afterwards, this helps with your supply and both mum and baby can enjoy this special time.

- The more you express, or breastfeed, the more milk you will produce.
- Your yellow Child Health Information booklet found in your baby's red Personal Health Record contains information about safe formula feeding and expressing breastmilk.

When choosing a formula to supplement your breastfeeding the important things for you to know are:

- All brands have to meet Australian standards so choose whichever is easy for you to get.
- Always follow the instructions for preparation.
- For safety always only prepare one bottle at a time.
- The more formula baby has instead of breastmilk, the more it will affect your breastfeeding.

What some mums have said:

"We are still having some problems with breastfeeding, so I bottle-feed my baby expressed breastmilk when we are out."

"I always started with a breastfeed, and then offered my baby some formula afterwards if she was still hungry."

"Although my baby does not get a lot of milk from my breast, we sometimes enjoy just having time out, quiet time together with her sucking at my breast."



**It takes three
to breastfeed
successfully;
mum, bub
and dad.**

Dad can be a big help too

When everyone is busy fussing over mum and bub in the early days, it's easy for dad's feelings and concerns to be overlooked. If your partner chooses to breastfeed, you may be:

- Worrying that bonding with your baby won't come as naturally as it does for your partner.
- Feeling inadequate that nothing you do can compete with breastfeeding.
- Resenting baby for 'coming between' you and your partner and feeling relief when it is weaned.
- Thinking that because your partner can give birth and breastfeed she is naturally a better parent.
- Wanting to find 'quick fix' solutions to your partner's tiredness by introducing formula feeding.

Even though breastfeeding is not always easy for you and your partner, you will be doing mum and bub's health a huge favour by supporting it. You'll be helping protect

your child from SIDS, asthma, allergies, diabetes, gut and chest infections, just to name just a few.

Breastfeeding also helps protect your partner from breast and ovarian cancer.

How dads can help

Dads might not be able to breastfeed, but their emotional and physical support is a massive help to mum. Some tips for how you can help (and get in the good books!) are:

- Take over some of the household chores like cleaning and cooking. Breastfeeding is tiring work at first. Studies show the more supportive you are, the longer your partner will breastfeed and the more confident she'll feel doing it.
- Tell her she's a superstar for breastfeeding and how proud of her you are for giving your child the best start in life.

- Help out with baby. Changing nappies, bathing, burping or even cuddling all give your partner a break and you a chance to bond with bub.
- Spend time bonding with your baby. A great activity is to let baby sleep on your bare chest. Babies love skin-to-skin contact and your heartbeat lulls them to sleep.
- Be patient if she's not up to sex. In the early days, sleep is going to be her biggest priority. She will let you know when she is ready.

If you would like to help out with the feeding, once mum and baby have got the hang of breastfeeding, get mum to express some breastmilk. Giving the occasional bottle of expressed milk will let mum get some much needed sleep. But be careful what you wish for. You may then find yourself doing the 2 am feeds!



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