



# BREAST AND CHEST FEEDING

## 10 GREAT REASONS TO BREAST AND CHEST FEED YOUR BABY

- BREASTMILK IS THE IDEAL FOOD FOR BABY
- IT HELPS YOUR BABY FIGHT OFF SICKNESS AND DISEASE
- BREASTMILK IS ALWAYS FRESH AND EXACTLY THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE. ITS READY WHEN BABY IS
- THE SIZE OF YOUR BREASTS DOES NOT DETERMINE YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE MILK
- BREASTFEEDING CAN PROTECT MOTHERS FROM MANY DISEASES SUCH AS: BREAST AND OVARIAN CANCER, DIABETES, AND HEART DISEASE
- CLOSENES AND COMFORT OF BREASTFEEDING HELPS YOU BOND WITH YOUR BABY
- BREASTMILK IS SO COMPLETE, IT IS THE ONLY FOOD OR DRINK YOUR BABY NEEDS FOR THE FIRST 6 MONTHS
- RESEARCH SHOWS THAT CHILDREN WHO WERE BREASTFED SCORE HIGHER ON IQ TESTS
- BREASTFEEDING IS GOOD FOR YOUR BABY, FOR YOU, AND THE ENVIRONMENT
- BREASTFEEDING SAVES YOU MONEY

SOURCE: PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA (2020). 10 GREAT REASONS TO BREASTFEED YOUR BABY

LEARNING TO BREAST AND CHESTFEED CAN TAKE TIME AND PATIENCE. IT IS A SKILL THAT YOU AND BABY WILL LEARN TOGETHER. PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES TO HELP PREPARE YOU FOR FEEDING SUCCESS!

<p>BREASTFEEDING WITH CONFIDENCE Artwork by Amanda Crovetti</p>	<p>IWK BREASTFEEDING CLASS: "BREASTFEEDING WITH CONFIDENCE"</p>	<p>10 GREAT REASONS TO BREASTFEED YOUR BABY Breastfeeding is important for you and your baby. To find out why visit the page.</p>	<p>10 GREAT REASONS TO BREASTFEED</p>
<p>10 VALUABLE TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING Breastfeeding is a skill that mother and baby learn together. These 10 tips can help you reach your breastfeeding goals.</p>	<p>10 VALUABLE TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING</p>	<p>MORE MILK SOONER IWK Health</p> <p>MORE MILK SOONER TEACHING VIDEOS PRENATAL HAND EXPRESSION</p>	<p>nova scotia health</p> <p>PUBLIC HEALTH EARLY YEARS PROGRAM</p>
<p>La Leche League Canada SUPPORTING FAMILIES FROM PREGNANCY TO WEANING</p>	<p>LA LECHE LEAGUE LOCAL AND VIRTUAL SUPPORTS</p>	<p>Loving Care BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS PDF (ENGLISH)</p>	<p>Breastfeeding Basics</p> <p>BREASTFEEDING BASICS PDF(ENGLISH)</p>

The first step to breast and chest feeding is skin to skin contact with your newborn. At IWK Health, immediate skin to skin contact with your baby is promoted and protected. If you are medically unable to provide skin to skin contact after birth, your support person will be encouraged to do so!



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT

Your Baby's Age	1 WEEK							2 WEEKS	3 WEEKS
	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	4 DAYS	5 DAYS	6 DAYS	7 DAYS		
<b>How Often Should You Breastfeed?</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 8 feeds per day. Your baby is sucking strongly, slowly, steadily and swallowing often.</p>								
<b>Your Baby's Tummy Size</b>	<p>Size of a cherry</p>		<p>Size of a walnut</p>		<p>Size of an apricot</p>		<p>Size of an egg</p>		
<b>Wet Diapers: How Many, How Wet</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 1 WET</p>		<p>At least 2 WET</p>		<p>At least 3 WET</p>		<p>At least 4 WET</p>		<p>At least 6 HEAVY WET WITH PALE YELLOW OR CLEAR URINE</p>
<b>Soiled Diapers: Number and Colour of Stools</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 1 to 2 BLACK OR DARK GREEN</p>		<p>At least 3 BROWN, GREEN, OR YELLOW</p>		<p>At least 3 large, soft and seedy YELLOW</p>				
<b>Your Baby's Weight</b>	Most babies lose a bit of weight in the first 3 days after birth.				From day 4 onward, most babies gain weight regularly.				
<b>Other Signs</b>	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily. Your breasts feel softer and less full after breastfeeding.								

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Breast milk is all the food a baby needs for the first six months. You can get advice, help and support from:  
 – Your health care provider.  
 – Telehealth Ontario's specialized breastfeeding services support line at 1-866-797-0000 or TTY at 1-866-797-0007.  
 – Bilingual Online Ontario Breastfeeding Services directory at www.ontariobreastfeeds.ca.

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To talk about supports you may want or need:  
**PUBLIC HEALTH CENTRAL ZONE**  
**SELF-REFERRAL LINE:**  
**902-481-5800**  
**\*A PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE WILL RETURN YOUR CALL WITHIN 2-3 BUSINESS DAYS**



## NORMAL CLUSTER FEEDING BEHAVIOUR

A growing baby doesn't always follow a predictable schedule of feeding. They typically feed at least 8 times in a 24 hour period and can sometimes cluster their feeding intervals together. This is called clusterfeeding. It is a **NORMAL** and **IMPORTANT** part of infant growth and development.

### CLUSTER FEEDING CAN OFTEN BE AN INDICATOR OF A GROWTH SPURT:

Baby's belly has grown, and they need a higher volume of milk to fill their growing belly.

**When your baby is cluster feeding you may worry about your milk supply**, especially when your baby is taking a long time to settle. Because of the frequent feedings, your breasts may feel empty and you may start to wonder if you have enough milk.

### 💡 **Reminder: Your breasts are never completely empty, even when it feels like they might be.**

Human milk in the evening can be higher in fat, and milk flow can be slower.

Your supply is lower in the afternoon and evening because prolactin (the milk making hormone) levels naturally decrease throughout the day and rise again at night.

### How babies may cluster feed:

- 1 **In the late afternoon/evening, or at night:** This often happens when baby experiences a growth spurt.
- 2 **Both day and night** - When this happens it can mean a few things: growth spurt, ineffective feeding/milk transfer (snacking vs full feeding), changes in milk supply.

**Remember:** Milk supply is not necessarily low when your baby cluster feeds, instead your baby is trying to signal to your body to make more milk for later. **The more your baby nurses, the more milk your body makes.**

**Once your supply increases, you will likely be back to your usual feeding routine.**

### **You may find the following few tips helpful:**

- ~ Identify cluster feeding is happening, and that it is **NORMAL**
  - ~ Relax and follow your baby's lead
- ~ Get comfortable, grab a snack and some hydration (time to catch up on your favourite show!)
- ~ If possible, try to rest in the early part of the day to prepare for the evening/night
- ~ Make sure you are eating well. Prepare meals beforehand to make it easier!
  - ~ Get as much support as you can
- ~ **Avoid topping up** or any supplementation that can interfere with this important supply and demand message your baby is sending your body.
  - ~ Avoid pacifiers as a way to delay feeding



**Frequent nursing can sometimes be a warning sign of inefficient milk transfer or low milk supply.**

### **Seek skilled support if baby:**

- ⚠️ is not gaining weight
- ⚠️ is not producing adequate wet and dirty diapers
- ⚠️ is continuously not settling after feeding

## Helpful Feeding Reminders

## GROWTH SPURT AGES:

Be prepared for cluster feeding behaviours around these ages:

**Day 2-3**

**Day 7-10**

**Week 2-3**

**Week 5-6**

**Months 3, 6, 9**



**It is normal for your newborn to lose weight within the first week of life. It is expected that they may lose up to 7-10% of their birth weight. Babies should return to their birthweight within 10-14 days after birth, but can take up to 2-3 weeks.**

**Feed baby on cue, rather than at timed intervals**  
Your baby has non-verbal ways of telling you when they are hungry and when they are full. Follow these cues for the baby led feeding.

