

BREASTFEEDING

Why is breastfeeding best?

- Breastfed babies have fewer health problems than babies who aren't breastfed. This is because your breast milk has antibodies that help keep your baby from getting sick. They help protect your baby from infections and allergies.
- Breast milk has nutrients in it that help your baby grow.
- Breast milk changes as your baby grows to give them just what they need as they develop.
- Breast milk is free and always ready when your baby wants to eat.
- Breastfeeding can help you and your baby bond and get to know each other.
- Breastfeeding can help you recover faster from pregnancy and lose some of the weight you gained.

How can you make sure your breast milk is safe and healthy for your baby?

- Drink lots of water. Have a glass of water each time you breastfeed.
- Eat healthy foods. You may need 450 to 500 extra calories a day when you're breastfeeding. Eat fruits, vegetables, whole-grain bread and pasta, lean meat and low-fat dairy products. Talk to your provider to make sure you get enough iodine and DHA in the foods you eat. These nutrients help your baby's bones, nerves and eyes develop. You need 290 micrograms of iodine and 300 milligrams of DHA each day when you're breastfeeding. If you don't get enough of these in food, you may need to take a supplement.
- Take your prenatal vitamin or a multivitamin every day. These can help give you nutrients that you may not get enough of in food.

- Limit caffeine. Caffeine is a drug that is found in things like coffee, tea, soda, chocolate and some medicines. Too much caffeine in breast milk can make your baby fussy or have trouble sleeping. If you drink coffee, have no more than two cups a day.
- Ask your provider if medicines you take are safe for your baby. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines. If they aren't safe, you may need to switch to safer ones.
- **Don't take any herbal products.** These include ginkgo and St. John's wort. Even though herbs are natural, they may not be safe for your baby. It's best not to use these products when you're breastfeeding.
- Tell your provider about all medicines you take before you start breastfeeding. Don't stop taking any medicine without talking to your provider first.
- Tell your provider right away if you get sick. Don't take any medicine without talking to your provider first.
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, use drugs or herbal products not prescribed by your provider or misuse prescription drugs. All of these can harm your baby. Tell your provider if you need help to quit. Also, keep your baby away from secondhand smoke (smoke from someone else's cigarette, cigar or pipe). If you are breastfeeding and you choose to drink alcohol, don't have more than two drinks a week. Wait at least 2 hours after each drink before you breastfeed.

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How do you know if you're making enough milk?

Most breastfeeding moms make as much breast milk as their babies need.

Day1	Size of a cherry (0.25oz)
Day2	Size of a walnut (.75-1oz)
1week	Size of an apricot (1.5-2oz)
1month	Size of a large egg (2.5-3oz)

As you and your baby get used to breastfeeding, your body learns when your baby needs more milk and makes as much as they need. Your baby is probably getting enough milk if they:

- Are gaining weight
- Are making six to eight wet diapers a day by the time they are 5 to 7 days old

If you're worried that your baby's not getting enough milk, talk to your baby's health care provider or a lactation consultant. A lactation consultant is a person who has special training to help with breastfeeding.

Does your baby need vitamins?

Yes. Vitamin D helps make bones and teeth strong. But breast milk does not contain all the vitamin D your baby needs. Give your baby vitamin D drops starting in the first few days of life. Based on your baby's size and growth, your baby's health care provider may want your baby to have other vitamins or iron as well. Talk to your baby's provider what kind of drops to use.

What about pumping?

A breast pump helps you remove milk from your breasts. You can use the milk later to feed your baby. Breast pumps are great if you're going back to work or school or want someone else to feed your baby. Here are some tips if you plan to use a breast pump:

- Ask your friends and family members which breast pump they used. Look for information online about breast pumps. Don't use a friend or family member's breast pump because it may have germs in places you can't clean well. Some models can be professionally sanitized. You may be able to rent or buy a used pump from an authorized provider like your hospital, a medical supply store or lactation consultant.
- Get help from a lactation consultant or a breastfeeding support group. They can help you learn how to use a breast pump.
- Talk to your boss. Employers with more than 50 employees have to give you time and space (that is not a bathroom) for pumping. If there's no refrigerator at work, use a small cooler to store the milk you pump.

What is manual expression?

Another option for getting milk from your breast is manual expression. This means you massage your breasts with your hands to release breast milk. Ask your postpartum nurse or lactation consultant to show you how.

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Human Milk Storage Guidelines:

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/baby/using-a-breast-pump.aspx>

How long to store fresh breast milk		
Place	Temperature	How long
Countertop (not refrigerated)	77 F or colder	Up to 4 hours
Refrigerator	40 F	Up to 4 days
Freezer	0F or colder	Up to 6 months is best; up to 12 months is OK

Can you store breast milk?

Yes. You can keep pumped breast milk in the refrigerator or freezer. Keep it in bottles or bags made for storing breast milk. Put just the amount of milk your baby needs for each feeding in each bottle or bag. Write the date on the container before storing it. If you're feeding your baby formula, please refer to the CDC's preparation and storage guidelines at cdc.gov/nutrition

Here's how to thaw frozen breast milk when you're ready to use it:

1. To thaw frozen milk, put the bottle or bag in the refrigerator or in a bowl of warm water. Make sure the bottle or bag is sealed so that water doesn't get into the milk. Pour the amount of thawed milk you need for your baby into a bottle for feeding. Once milk is thawed, use it within 24 hours.
2. To warm thawed or refrigerated milk, put the bottle or bag under running hot water or in a bowl of warm water. Never heat breast milk in the microwave. It kills nutrients in the milk. And the milk can heat unevenly and create hot spots that could burn your baby's mouth.
3. Shake the bottle or bag. Put a drop or two of milk on the back of your hand to test the temperature. If it's too hot, let it cool.

How long should you breastfeed?

It's best to breastfeed your baby for at least 1 year. Even when they start eating solid foods (usually at about 6 months), you can still keep breastfeeding. Your body makes breast milk as long as your baby breastfeeds.

Can you get pregnant while you're breastfeeding?

Yes. Breastfeeding is not a reliable form of birth control. It doesn't always prevent pregnancy. Birth control helps keep you from getting pregnant. Hormonal methods of birth control, like the pill and the patch, contain progestin and/or estrogen. Estrogen helps regulate your period, but it may cause you to make less breast milk. So it may not be a good birth control choice if you're breastfeeding. Talk to your provider about the right kind of birth control for you.

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