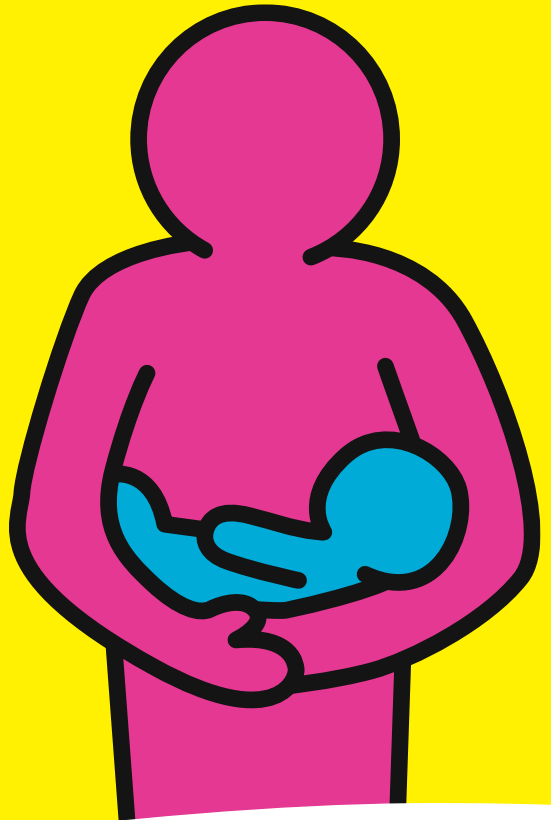


Off to the best start

A guide to
help you start
breastfeeding



If you are concerned about any of the points covered in this leaflet or would like support and help with breastfeeding, speak to your midwife or health visitor.



A good start for a healthier life

Breastfeeding is good news for baby and you

- Breast milk is tailor-made for your baby. It boosts your baby's ability to fight illness and infection - babies who are not breastfed are more likely to get diarrhoea and chest infections.
- Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for around the first 6 months and alongside solid foods thereafter.
- Breastfeeding also lowers a mother's risk of breast cancer and may reduce the risk of ovarian cancer too.
- Keeping your baby close will help you to respond to his needs for food, love and comfort.



How to breastfeed

Breastfeeding is something you and your baby learn together, and, like anything new, you need to get the hang of it. Here's how:



Step 1. Hold your baby's whole body close with his nose level with your nipple. Make sure his head and body are in a line and facing you, so he is not twisting his head or body awkwardly. Support your baby along his back and shoulders rather than his head - so he can move his head freely to attach to your breast.



Step 2. Let your baby's head tip back a little so that his top lip can brush against your nipple. This should help your baby to make a wide open mouth.



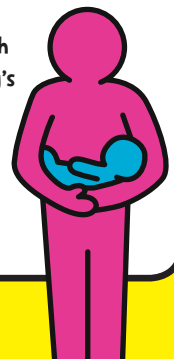
Step 3. When your baby's mouth opens wide, his chin should be able to touch your breast first, with his head tipped back so that his tongue can reach as much breast as possible.



Step 4. With his chin touching your breast and his nose clear, his mouth should be wide open. You will see much more of the darker skin of your nipple above your baby's top lip than below his bottom lip. Your baby's cheeks will look full and rounded as they feed.

For information on breastfeeding positions visit:

www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-positions



Signs that your baby is feeding well

- Your baby has a large mouthful of breast.
- It doesn't hurt you when your baby feeds (although the first few sucks may feel strong).
- Your baby rhythmically takes long sucks and swallows.
- Your baby finishes the feed, appears content and satisfied after feeds and comes off the breast on his own. Your breasts and nipples should not be sore.

How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?

- Lots of mums wonder if their baby's feeding well and getting enough - especially in the first few days, but it's very rare that mums don't make enough breast milk for their babies. It may just take a bit of time before you feel confident that you are providing enough milk.
- Generally, your baby will let you know if he's not getting what he wants; wet and dirty nappies are also a good indication, as is hearing your baby swallow.
- Your baby should be back to his birth weight by two weeks and then continue to gain weight.

Your baby's nappies



- In the first 48 hours, your baby is likely to have only 2 or 3 wet nappies. Wet nappies should then start to become more frequent, with at least 6 every 24 hours from day 5 onwards.
- At the beginning, your baby will pass a black tar-like poo (called meconium).
- By day 3, this should be changing to a lighter, loose, greenish poo.
- From day 4 and for the first 4 – 6 weeks your baby should pass at least 2 yellow poos a day.
- If your baby has not pooped in the last 24-48 hours, speak to your midwife or health visitor as this may mean he isn't getting enough milk.

Vitamin D

- Breastfed babies up to 12 months old should be given a daily supplement of 8.5 to 10mcg of vitamin D (340-400 IU/d).
- It is recommended that all breastfeeding women take a daily supplement of 10mcg of Vitamin D (400 IU/d).



Support services

The following can provide support and can help you find a peer supporter:

National Breastfeeding Helpline

 0300 100 0212*

available 9.30am to 9.30pm 365 days a year

www.nationalbreastfeedinghelpline.org.uk

National Childbirth Trust Helpline

 0300 330 0771*

www.nct.org.uk

La Leche League

 0345 120 2918*

www.laleche.org.uk

Useful resources

Building a happy baby leaflet

unicef.uk/happybaby

Caring for your baby at night leaflet

unicef.uk/caringatnight

Breastfeeding and relationships in the early days video

unicef.uk/breastfeedingearlydays

Hand expression video

unicef.uk/handexpression

Join our Start4Life baby club

Sign up for weekly emails for trusted NHS advice, videos and tips on your pregnancy, birth and parenthood:

www.nhs.uk/start4life/signups

24/7 help with breastfeeding

Talk to the Breastfeeding Friend from Start4Life on

 Google Assistant

 Amazon Alexa

 and Facebook Messenger

for more NHS approved advice and tips.

For lots more helpful information visit: www.nhs.uk/start4life

*Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than a national rate call to an 01 or 02 number and must count towards any inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls.