



Rough guide to breastfeeding

In the first few days you and your newborn will be getting to know each other. Give yourself and your baby time to be comfortable with breastfeeding.

Positioning and attachment

There are many different positions for breastfeeding. Most important is to make sure you are comfortable. Make sure your baby's head and body is in a straight line otherwise she won't be able to swallow properly. Hold your baby close with her nose level with your nipple.

Feeding times

Each baby is different. The feeding times we've provided below are, in each scenario, are an approximation only.

Newborn – 2 weeks

Expect your baby to be sleepy but make sure he feeds at least every 3 hours. At this stage his stomach is the size of a walnut, so feeding periods probably won't last long.

Colostrum is the first lacteal secretion produced by the mammary glands. Its thick and nutritious and an important natural immune system enhancer. So if your baby wants to feed more frequently allow him to do so.

2-4 weeks

Baby will start feeding more frequently (every 1.5 to 2.5 hours). Continue demand feeding even through the night. Demand feeding means feeding your baby when she signals that she's hungry by crying or sucking on her hands. Don't wake baby at night. She'll wake if she's hungry.

Try to get into early evening routine. It'll help you to cope with sleep issues later. Put your baby down when she's awake but sleepy. This will help her to learn to fall asleep by herself. It takes practice so give yourself time and don't get despondent.

Suggested evening feeding routine

18:00 feed
18:30 bath
18:45 feed
19:00 bed



When baby is likely to wake at night

19:00 bed
22:00 feed
02:00 feed
06:00 feed

5-6 weeks

Your baby will probably drop the 22:00 feed first.

19:00 bed
01:00 or 02:00 feed
05:00 or 06:00 feed

3 months 2 weeks

At this stage baby is likely to drop the 02:00 feed as well.

19:00 bed
05:00 or 06:00 feed

4-6 months

Now is the time to start solids. Many babies only start sleeping through once solids are introduced.

More feeding tips

- Regardless of the feeding routine, if your baby wakes, you need to respond, even if it's just for a cuddle.
- Between about 5:00 and 20:00 can be a niggly, 'colicky' time for some babies. They tend to cluster feed (feed very frequently) and cry a lot. They do this to fill themselves so they can sleep longer at night.
- If your baby sleeps through the night a few times don't feed him if he wakes up thereafter. Otherwise he'll continue to wake up for a feed he doesn't need.
- Resist the urge to change your baby's nappy at night, unless it's badly soiled. Best to keep him in a sleepy state if you must change his nappy. While doing so don't switch on lights, talk or make eye contact.
- During growth spurts (10-12 days, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months) he'll wake more frequently and need feeding.

Essential breastfeeding items

- A good quality nipple cream. Put it on your nipples regularly in the beginning even if you think you don't need it. Your nipples will become tender without it even if your baby's latch is correct.
- Mini milk express machine and bottle or bags in which to store milk in the freezer.
- A comfortable evening feeding bra.

Milk storage

- Never store more than 50 mls at a time. Once defrosted your milk must be consumed by baby almost immediately (will last 6 hours at room temperature). If not, it must be thrown away. Don't waste it if you can help it.
- Milk can be stored in the freezer for up to 3 months or in the refrigerator for 24 hours. The best defrost method is overnight in the refrigerator, or stand the sealed bottle in a jug of boiling water until warm (drinkable).

