



# Healthy Families Homebirth

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## Breastfeeding Tips

- First, get comfortable. Have you used the bathroom in a while? Do you have food and drink available? What position are you in- sitting-up, lying down, slouched over? Do you have some pillows for your arms, back, or knees?
- While holding your baby, breathe and relax. Your baby will respond to your cues.
- Watch for signs that your baby is ready to be fed. She will lick her lips, move her head, and bring her hand to her face.
- Breastfeeding positions: A good position to start with is tummy-to-tummy. The baby placed with his tummy diagonally across your tummy. The body is best supported by the opposite arm than the breast he is on. This way you hand can support his shoulders and neck. Another good position to try is side-lying. This position has you lying on one side and the baby's body is facing yours.
- The latch: The baby's mouth should be taking in a considerable amount of breast tissue. As the baby comes to the breast, have your nipple in line with the baby's nose. Then as she opens her mouth wide, bring her whole body in a little closer. That way she can take in most of your nipple and depending on your nipple size she may take in some of the outer breast tissue also.
- If the latch isn't right for you, it's not going to be right for baby either. Simply place your finger under the lower lip to break the suction and try again. You and your baby are learning this together.
- Your baby responds to milk. As your milk flows, your baby will be able to regulate the quantity the he needs. Switching sides may or may not be necessary.
- Giving your baby the opportunity to feed within the first two hours after birth is ideal. Often time's babies are hungry within the first hour of birth, and then go into a resting period.
- Colostrum is the best first food your baby can have. If breastfeeding is not available for some reason, you can hand express your colostrum to be fed to your baby.
- Allow your baby to let you know when she is hungry. Avoid waiting until she is crying because calming her down will expend more energy and delay her from getting the food she needs.
- Your baby may be hungry every few hours. Be sure to rest, eat, and take care of yourself in between those times.



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- Supplementing your baby in between feedings is counter-productive. Formula takes a much longer time for your baby's body to digest. This could create engorgement for you because your body knows that it is time to feed the baby, but the baby is not hungry.
- Pacifiers and bottles pose another risk to breastfeeding. Pacifiers can disturb your baby's feeding cues and your response to them. Pacifiers and bottles can also get your baby into the habit of sucking that isn't the same as breastfeeding. If hand expressed milk, donated milk, formula, or another type of supplementation is necessary for your baby, it is better to spoon or cup feed rather than bottle feed.
- To determine if your baby is getting enough milk, watch him while he's eating and his behavior afterwards. During the feeding, his temple should be moving, then pausing. The movements are allowing milk to enter his mouth, whereas the pause is a swallow. After the feeding, your baby should be content and maybe sleepy. If your baby is breaking the latch often, fussy, or overly sleepy, then you may want to seek additional help to pinpoint the problem.
- Don't take professional breastfeeding advice from someone that hasn't watched you and your baby nurse. If someone is simply telling you what you should be doing without seeing how you and your baby breastfeed first, then they aren't giving accurate information.
- For the first 3-4 days after birth, some weight loss is considered normal. When breastfeeding is going normally babies tend to regain their birth weight within 10-14 days. For the first 3-4 months, weight gain is about 6 ounces per week. After that weight gain slows, but length and head circumference are also important measurements of growth.



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