

BREASTFEEDING PLAN

by Lynn Apple RN IBCLC

1) **Keep a diary the first week or two at home of the following breastfeeding information:**

The number of feedings/ 24 hours. Count from the beginning of one feeding to the beginning of the next feeding.

**Aim for a minimum of 8 feedings/24 hours. A typical newborn eats 8-12 times in a 24 hour period.
Note:A baby that is gaining at least 25gm (1 oz) a day does not need to be woken up at night. When you are ready to go to sleep let your baby's demand dictate the night feedings.

The approximate duration in minutes of each feeding.

*You do not need to watch the clock! Try to encourage the baby to continue for at least 15 minutes/ breast. It is variable but you may find the baby will continue for about 15 or 20 minutes/ breast.

Mark down if you used one or both breasts during the feeding.

Alternate each feeding which breast you begin with.

2) **In your diary also keep count of:**

The number of wet diapers/24 hours

*There should be at least 5.

The number of dirty diapers/24 hours

During the first month beginning after day 4 there should be at least 3.

3) **Positioning Baby at the Breast:**

Position _____ Alternate position _____

*Check for correct allignment of baby's body: the ear, shoulder, & hip should be in a straight line.

*Check that baby is close enough to you. Your tummy against his tummy & his nose on level with your nipple.

*Before beginning to nurse your baby always check that baby's mouth is wide open (like a big yawn) with his tongue down. Wait for a wide open mouth before bringing your baby onto the breast.

*After your milk has "come in" (about day 4) you can begin to observe for signs of good milk

flow also known as the "let down" reflex. Any of the following are possible signs: milk dripping from the other breast as the baby nurses, a tingling in your nipple after the baby begins to nurse, sounds of the baby swallowing, your baby's suck changes from rapid sucking to a slower pace of sucking.

*Check the position of the baby's lips, they should be flanged outward which avoids nipple tension.

*Check the baby's chin is touching the breast. This is a good sign that he is close enough to you for a good latch.

4) **Nipple Care:**

You do not need to wash your nipples . Avoid using soap on your nipples as it makes your skin drier which can make it more fragile. Apply breast milk and then a lanolin ointment (as below) the first few days after the baby is born as a preventative measure. After the first week you can stop the lanolin ointment if you prefer or just use it occasionally if your nipples appear to be dry.

5) **How to end a feeding:**

When you feel that the baby is finished nursing you can insert your pinky finger into the baby's mouth to break the suction. It will then be easy to slip your nipple out of the baby's mouth without any tension to your nipple.

6) **Nipple Soreness Care Plan:**

If you have developed sore nipples consult with a breastfeeding specialist to help you determine why this has occurred so that the problem can be corrected. Some mothers do initially experience some nipple tenderness in the early days of breastfeeding however it is **NOT** a normal part of breastfeeding to have sore nipples.

At your pharmacy you can purchase "PureLan 100" by Medela. It is especially made for breastfeeding moms and do not need to be washed off before the baby nurses. The product is optional but for many mothers helpful and nurturing for the skin as it adjusts to breastfeeding. After your milk "comes in" it is also very good for nipple care to express a small amount of breastmilk and gently massage the milk all over your areola and nipple. Let it dry a few minutes then apply a pure lanolin ointment to the entire area.

Change your position regularly to avoid the continuous pressure in the same sore spots.

Position possibilities: Cradle _____ Cross over _____ football _____ side lying _____

17) **Nursing pads:** Nursing pads can be worn to avoid leaking milk into your clothing. Not everybody needs pads so wait and see how often you are using them before you buy any quantity of them. The pads you use should not have any plastic in them and the pads should be changed when wet. Pads are available in stores in a disposable or reusable format. You can also make your own pads using white cotton handkerchiefs or a cotton diaper. You can wash these with your bras & reuse them.

8) **Avoid engorgement!** During pregnancy read the article on engorgement also available on this web site. Take a printed copy along to the hospital for reinforcement.

9) **Nursing Bra:** It is comfortable and practical to use a special bra designed for breastfeeding. Buy one or two in your 9th month, wash them and start wearing them to make them comfortable. Make sure that your nursing bra is never too tight as this can provoke discomfort and lead to problems. It may be helpful to plan ahead and at the "merceria" buy an extra set of hooks for the back of the bra. For the short period of time while your milk is "coming in" on days 3-5 the extra set of hooks will ease the tension. Cotton is the best material for nursing bras.

10 **Newborn Weight Gain:**

Keep in mind that : Most newborns loose weight the first few days. It is acceptable to loose up to 10% of birth weight. A breastfed baby does not gain in the same pattern as a bottle fed baby.

A healthy weight gain for a breastfed baby during the first year is defined as :

1) Regaining the birth weight by 2 weeks of age.

2) A gain of:

26-31 gm/ day for the first three months.

17-18gms/day for babies from 3-6 months of age .

12-13gms/ day from 6-9 months of age.

9 gm/day from 9-12 months.

Babies typically double their birth weight by 6 months and triple it by one year of age.