

Breastfeeding tips & techniques:

Overcoming Common Breastfeeding Concerns



Sure, breastfeeding is natural, but sometimes there are challenges. Breastfeeding is a learned skill. It takes practice. Do not be surprised if challenges come up-you can prepare for them ahead of time.

Ask for Help if:

- Your milk does not come in before your baby is 4 days old
- Your nipples are still sore after 7-10 days
- Your breasts become too full and do not feel softer after baby nurses
- Your breasts are red, sore and hard
- You have flu and chills

Sore nipples:

It is normal for your nipples to feel a little tender at first. Expect some tenderness by day 2 or 3. It should go away by day 7 to 10. Sore nipples are almost always caused by problems with positions and latch. Both can be easy to fix. These tips may help.

- Help your baby to latch on the right way. Wait for your baby's mouth to open wide. Then put your baby to the breast. Place as much of the nipple and dark circle of areola in your baby's mouth as you can. This helps to stop pinching or pulling on the nipple. A relaxed position makes breastfeeding more comfortable, and helps your baby get more milk.
- Air dry your nipples after nursing. Put a few drops of breast milk on your nipples to soothe the skin.
- Use pure lanolin cream on your breasts. Multiple-holed breast shields or gel pads in your bra also may help. These ease discomfort and keep your nipples from rubbing against your bra. Avoid plastic breast shields.
- Nurse your baby on the breast that is less sore first or choose the side that gives less milk in order to boost your milk supply in that breast.
- Apply an ice pack to the breast for 10 minutes before feeding. This helps numb the nipple. It also makes it easier for your baby to latch on.

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Need
breastfeeding
advise or help?

It is OK to ask for help:

CALL your doctor or pediatrician ► CONTACT a lactation consultant ► REFER to the numerous resources listed at www.abbottnutrition.com/breastfeeding

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Let-down (the flow of milk):

If your breast milk comes out too fast, your baby may have trouble swallowing all of it. This is common with newborns. Your baby becomes better at nursing, usually by 2 months of age. To help your baby, try pumping some milk before nursing or stop nursing your baby several times during feeding. This gives your baby a chance to catch a breath, burp, or swallow.

For some mothers, breast milk comes down very slowly. Relaxing, massaging your breast, or using warm compresses before nursing may help your milk flow better. These tips may also help let-down occur faster:

- Find a quiet nursing area
- Focus on your baby
- Enjoy the close contact with your baby
- Lie down while nursing

Emotions:

Emotions or stress can affect let-down and may reduce the supply of breast milk. Try to relax and continue to breastfeed or express your breast milk. This allows your milk supply to return to normal.

Engorgement:

This sometimes occurs if the baby does not breastfeed often or long enough during the first 3-5 days after birth, when your milk first comes in. There are many reasons for this. Some babies refuse the breast and others try to nurse but have problems latching on. When your breasts are hard and full, the nipples flatten. This makes it hard for your baby to latch.

If one or both breasts become full or hard between feedings, use a breast pump or your hand to express your breast milk. Expressing milk makes it easier for your baby to nurse because you are less engorged. Different nursing positions also may help. Ask your doctor or lactation consultant for support if this happens and you cannot get your baby to feed.

These tips may help too:

- Nurse often
- Apply a warm washcloth or take warm showers
- Gently massage your breast
- Use ice packs to help reduce swelling
- Pump some of your milk before nursing

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Flat or inverted nipples:

Some women have flat or inverted nipples. This may make breastfeeding difficult, especially if your baby is not positioned or latched on the right way. Once your baby gets used to your nipple, breastfeeding goes just fine. If latch-on hurts, ask for help. Try wearing breast shields between feedings. It might help to use a breast pump just before nursing. When babies are correctly latched on, they suck on the breast and not the nipple. These tips may help:

- Roll your nipple between your fingers before nursing
- Use a breast pump at the start of a feeding to help draw your nipple out

Blocked ducts:

Blocked ducts feel like pea-size lumps under the skin of the breast. They are usually sore to the touch. They are caused by skipping or changing feedings, a large milk supply, heavy breasts not well supported, wearing a tight bra with underwires, or a poor breastfeeding position. These tips may help:

- Apply a warm washcloth or take warm showers
- Nurse often
- Hand express or gently pump after feedings
- Gently massage your breast

Mastitis:

If a blocked duct continues, it can become inflamed. This is an infection of the milk duct. It can often feel like the flu. If you feel chills or are achy, and breastfeeding is not going well, ask for help right away. Watch out for unusual warmth, redness, tenderness or swelling in part of or in the entire breast. Mastitis often causes pain and can start quickly. Your breast milk is safe but the area around the blocked milk duct needs medical attention. It is safe to breastfeed from that breast.

For relief:

- Visit your doctor for antibiotics (this is safe for both you and your baby)
- Nurse often
- Apply a warm washcloth and take warm showers
- Gently massage your breast while nursing
- Rest more often and drink more fluids

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How to know Your Healthy Full-Term Breastfed Baby is Getting Enough Milk

- Your baby may have only one or two wet diapers during the first day or two after birth. Beginning about the third or fourth day, your baby will have at least eight really wet cloth diapers (five to six disposables)
- Your baby will pass meconium, the greenish-black, tarry first stool, over the first day or two. Baby will begin having at least two to five bowel movements a day beginning about the third day after birth.
- Your baby may lose up to seven percent of his/her birth weight during the first three or four days. Once your milk supply becomes more plentiful on the third or fourth day, expect your baby to begin gaining at least four to eight ounces (113 to 227 grams) per week or at least a pound (454 grams) a month. Be sure to count weight gain from the lowest weight (his weight on the third or fourth day), not from birth weight.
- Your baby will nurse frequently, often every one and one-half to three hours, averaging about eight to twelve times a day.
- Your baby will appear healthy, his color will be good, his skin will be firm, he will be filling out and growing in length and head circumference, and he will be alert and active.

IF YOU NEED TO INCREASE YOUR MILK supply

Get help: If your baby is not gaining well, or is losing weight, keep in close touch with your baby's doctor. In many cases, improved breastfeeding techniques will quickly resolve the situation, but in some cases, slow weight gain may indicate a serious health problem.

Nurse frequently: For as long as your baby will nurse. A sleepy baby may need to be awakened and encouraged to nurse more frequently.

Offer both breasts at each feeding: This will ensure that your baby gets all the milk available and that both breasts are stimulated frequently.

Be sure that baby is positioned correctly at the breast: Baby's lips should be on the areola (dark area surrounding the nipple), well behind the nipple. If you are not sure baby is sucking well, or feel any soreness, ask your health care provider, La Leche League Leader, or other breastfeeding specialist to help you.

Try switch nursing: Switching breasts two or three times during each feeding will help keep your baby interested in nursing. Switch breasts soon as baby's sucking slows down and he swallows less often. Your milk supply will be stimulated by using both breasts at least twice at each feeding.

Give your baby only human milk: If your baby has been receiving formula supplements, do not cut these out abruptly. Gradually cut back on the amount of supplement as your milk supply increases, but watch baby's wet and soiled diapers to be sure he is getting enough milk. Stay in touch with your baby's doctor.

All your baby's sucking should be at the breast: If some supplement is necessary temporarily, it can be given by spoon, cup, or with a nursing supplementer, a device used to feed baby additional milk through a small tube while he nurses at the breast.

Pay attention to your own need for rest, relaxation, proper diet, and sufficient fluids: Taking care of yourself will aid in increasing your milk supply and improving your general sense of well-being.

If you have any further questions or concerns be sure to get in touch with your La Leche League Leader or other breastfeeding specialist. Remember that a baby who is not gaining weight will need to be checked regularly by a doctor.



Resources for Nursing Mothers

Blue Earth County

International Lactation Consultant Association

Find a Lactation Consultant in your area at: www.ilca.org

La Leche League

llmankatostpeter.weebly.com/

Free support & information for breastfeeding mothers. For more info, call 507-400-0928 or email MankatoLLL@gmail.com.

Mankato: 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at Aurora Chiropractic, 1051 Madison Ave, Ste 2

St. Peter: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm at River Valley Birth Center, 526 W. Park Row

Mankato Clinic

mankatoclinic.com/childbirth-education-class-schedules

1421 Premier Drive, Mankato 507-385-4089

OB Childbirth Education: Breastfeeding Classes; schedule posted each year. Free & open to all. Register online.

Mayo Clinic Health System – Mankato

mayoclinichealthsystem.org/locations/mankato/medical-services/birthing-centers/breast-feeding

1025 Marsh Street, Mankato 507-385-2967

Lactation Services Program provides: Support & guidance for premature infants; Collaboration with certified lactation consultants; Phone consult & support after hospital discharge; Information on breast pump rentals & breast-feeding accessories.

Baby Café: Drop-in opportunity for support on Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 pm at the Children's Museum of So MN, 224 Lamm St, Mankato. For more info, call 507-594-2967.

New Ulm Medical Center

allinahealth.org/New-Ulm-Medical-Center/Services/Birth-Center/

1324 Fifth St N, New Ulm 507-217-5333

Breastfeeding Mother's Support Group: Nursing infants are welcome. Meets the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1400 S. State Street, New Ulm.

Childbirth Prep: Breast/Bottle Feeding Class held in odd months in the hospital auditorium. To register, call 507-217-5333.

Sleepy Eye Medical Center

semedicalcenter.org/services/birthing-services/

400 Fourth Ave NW, Sleepy Eye 507-794-8478

Prenatal Classes: For the schedule or to register, email kbloedow@semedicalcenter.org.

Breastfeeding Support Group: Meets the 1st Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm in the Union Room.

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) Program

Breastfeeding support & info, as well as nutrition for nursing mothers. health.state.mn.us/people/wic/ppt/home.html 800-WIC-4030

Blue Earth County WIC

www.blueearthcountymn.gov/index.aspx?NID=264

410 S. Fifth St., Mankato 507-304-4163

Breast Pumps & Breastfeeding Supplies

Allina Health Home Oxygen & Medical Equipment
1600 Madison Ave, Suite 110, Mankato 507-345-8593
1601 South Broadway, New Ulm 507-217-5585
Additional locations in Owatonna and Hutchinson

Handi Medical Supply in the Madison East Mall
1400 Madison Ave, Suite 618, Mankato 507-779-7560

Mayo Medical Supply Store in the Madison East Mall
1400 Madison Ave, Suite 100A, Mankato 507-594-2689

Resources for Nursing Mothers Returning to Work

Employees' Guide to Breastfeeding and Working
www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/business-case-for-breastfeeding.html

Practical tips to prepare for returning to work, expressing milk at work, and getting support
www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/going-back-to-work.html

or call the toll-free hotline at 800-994-9662

Local public health staff are available to support you, your worksite, or your child care provider
www.BlueEarthCountyMN.gov/BeWell
or call 507-304-4411

Legal Protections for Nursing Mothers in Minnesota
www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Protections%20Nursing%20Mothers%20Sept%202014.pdf

This information was compiled by the following partners:

Southcentral Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition

The Coalition's goal is to work collaboratively to increase the initiation, duration, & exclusivity of breastfeeding in Southcentral Minnesota. mnbreastfeedingcoalition.org

Local **Statewide Health Improvement Partnership** in Blue Earth, Brown, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Waseca Counties.
www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ship/index.html



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