

breastfeeding good for baby, good for mum

Factsheet No: 8

Your new baby: Normal behaviours of a breastfed 0-3 month old baby

Breastmilk

Breastmilk provides all the nourishment your baby needs for the early months of life.

Growth

Your baby is getting enough breastmilk if they show steady growth (weight and length) at their regular clinic review. If growth is slowing or rapidly increasing, it is a good idea to discuss this with your Maternal and Child Health (MACH) Nurse or GP. Poor growth may be due to causes other than insufficient milk.

A good breastmilk supply

To establish and maintain a good breastmilk supply, it is important to let your baby feed whenever he or she wakes or seems hungry. Regular feeding during the night will increase your milk supply. This is when your body is producing higher levels of the hormone prolactin (essential for milk production). In the beginning, it is normal for babies to wake around every 3 hours for a feed. However, if your baby sleeps for longer than this and is happy and growing well, it is not necessary to wake them just for a feed.



For more information on breastfeeding you can contact:

ACT Community
Health Intake
(to make an appointment
or locate your nearest MACH
clinic)

Ph: 6207 9977

Tresillian Parents Helpline
(24hr free call)

Ph: 1800 637 357

Australian Breastfeeding
Association
National Breastfeeding
Helpline

(24hr free call)

Ph: 1800 mum2mum

Ph: 1800 686 2686

Karitane Careline

Ph: 1300 CARING

Ph: 1300 227 464

Your GP

Feeding

It is normal for breastfed babies to vary their feeding patterns from time to time. This may mean they will sometimes want to feed more often (cluster feed). This does not mean you don't have enough milk.

Most mums find it best to follow their baby's lead and breastfeed according to their baby's need. It is important to note that babies breastfeed for comfort as well as to satisfy hunger and thirst. Following your baby's cues will help to ensure that your supply of milk matches your baby's needs.

Breastfed babies generally feed from both breasts during each feed. Normal feeding may be as quick as 10 minutes but may take more than 40 minutes. Getting support from family, friends and health professionals can be helpful whilst you and your baby get to know one another and establish your breastfeeding relationship. Breastfeeding is a learned skill and it can take time to learn what works best for you and your baby.

Nappies

A breastfed baby will usually have at least 5 wet disposable nappies (6-8 wet cloth nappies) over 24 hours. Bowel motions can vary in breastfed babies. Some babies may have frequent runny stools (poo) after each feed. Other babies can have infrequent stools with up to 7-10 days between movements. This is due to the differences in the composition of breastmilk between mothers. This may also be due to differences in the digestive systems of babies. Stools can be runny to soft and passed at any time.

If you have any concerns about your baby's nappies, you can discuss these with your Maternal and Child Health Nurse or GP.



Sleep

It is normal for babies to wake during the night to breastfeed. Babies' sleep patterns will vary from time to time and most will wake once, twice or more during the night for a breastfeed and nappy change. This does not mean you do not have enough breastmilk. It is important to allow your baby to feed according to his or her need. You may find it helpful to discuss settling techniques with your Maternal and Child Health Nurse or GP.

Looking after a new baby can be quite demanding. It is important to try and take good care of yourself by eating well, drinking plenty of water and getting as much rest as you can.

www.kidsatplay.act.gov.au
An ACT Government initiative delivered
in partnership with Heart Foundation ACT

Translating &
Interpreter Service
Ph: 131 450

Acknowledgments:

Information in this brochure is drawn from the Australian Breastfeeding Association publications, and the National Health and Medical Research Council's Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia—incorporating the infant feeding guidelines for health workers. The Kids at Play website was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra July 2013

Produced for Kids at Play - Active Play and Eating Well Project by ACT Government in partnership with Heart Foundation ACT