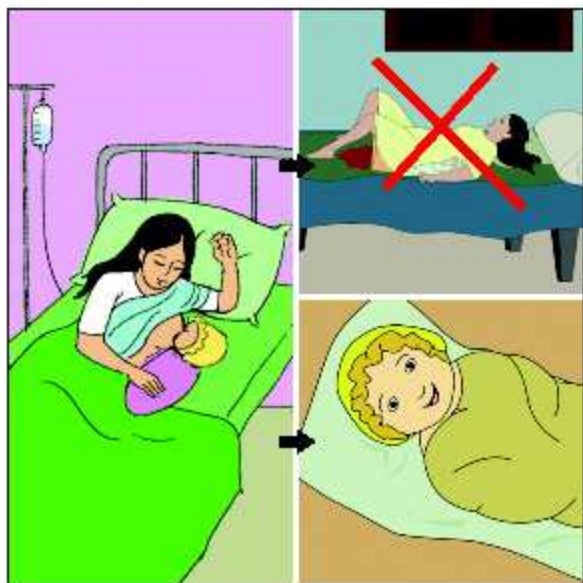




**The Right Way to
Breastfeed**

**Early and exclusive
breastfeeding is one of
the most important steps
towards ensuring
newborn health.**

**This booklet tells you
about the importance of
breastfeeding, the right
way to breastfeed and
how to manage problems
related to breastfeeding.**



Why early breastfeeding?

A mother should begin breastfeeding within an hour after her baby is born, even before the placenta is expelled. In fact early breastfeeding helps the placenta to be delivered easily. It also reduces the risk of excessive bleeding after delivery.

Beginning breastfeeding soon after birth helps in the early secretion of breast milk.

Early breastfeeding helps to keep the baby warm. The first milk (colostrum) protects the newborn from diseases.

Breastfeeding helps mother and baby develop a close emotional bond.



Till 6 Months



Why exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months?

For a newborn, breast milk is the complete food. It keeps the baby healthy and also protects her from infections.

Up to the age of six months, a newborn baby should be exclusively breastfed, that is, the baby must be given only breast milk and nothing else (not even water or honey or ghutti or gripe water or cow's milk).





Giving other foods or fluids can cause infections. For example, germs in bottles can cause diarrhoea.

If the other foods are too dilute, the baby does not get enough nourishment and therefore cannot grow properly.



8-10 times in 24 hours

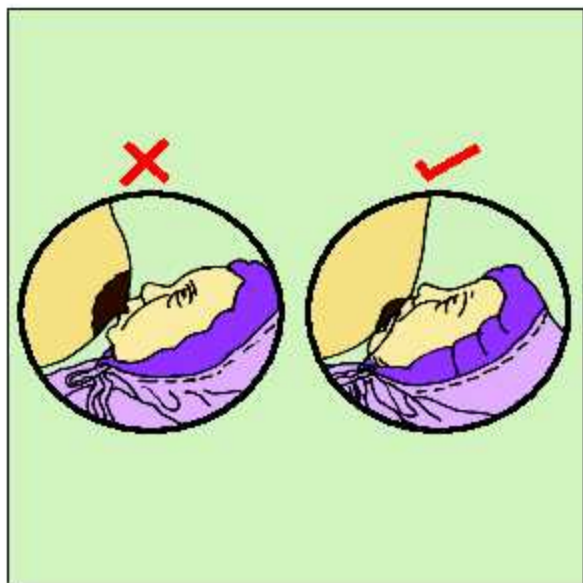


How to breastfeed

Breastfeed as often as the baby wants, day or night, and as long as the baby wants. A newborn should be breastfed at least 8-10 times in 24 hours.

Feeding more often helps in production of milk; the more the baby sucks, the more milk is produced.





Correct breastfeeding positions

The baby should be held close to the mother's body. The baby's face should face the mother's breast, with nose opposite the nipple. His mouth should be wide open, well attached and covering most of the areola, with lower lip turned outwards.

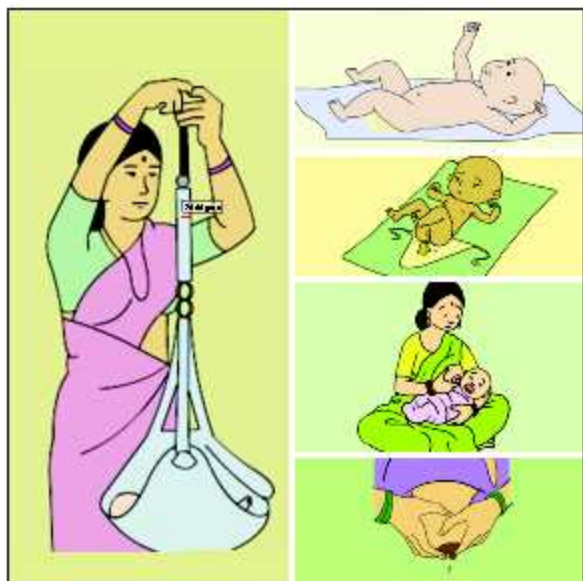




The mother should hold the baby in such a way that the baby's bottom as well as head and shoulders are well supported.

The mother's body should be relaxed and comfortable, and she should maintain eye contact with the baby. She may feel her uterus cramping or some milk leaking; after the feed her breast feels soft, with the nipples protruding. These are signs that the breastfeeding is going well.





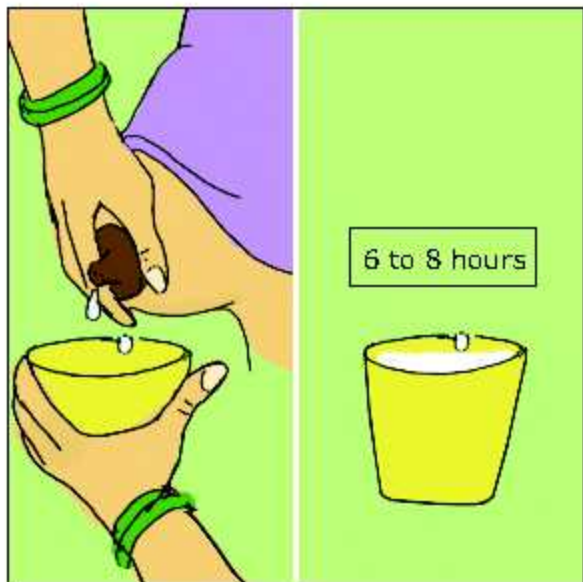
Making sure the baby gets enough breast milk

These are some signs that the baby is not getting enough milk.

- Baby's weight does not increase by at least 500 grams in a month, or if weight after two weeks is less than birth weight.
- Baby passes small amounts of concentrated urine less than six times a day and the urine is yellow and strong smelling.
- Baby has hard, dry or green stools.
- Baby is not satisfied after breastfeed and often cries; wants to be breastfed very frequently and for very long periods; or refuses to breastfeed.
- No milk comes when mother tries to express; if the mother's breast did not enlarge or milk did not come at all.

If a baby shows any of these signs, the mother must try to improve the way she is breastfeeding.





Expressing breast milk

If the baby is unable to suckle, or if the mother is unable to breastfeed the baby directly, she can express breast milk into a clean bowl and then feed the baby using a clean spoon.

Milk expressed after the first 72 hours can be kept at room temperature for about six-eight hours.





- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Place a warm compress on the breast for a few minutes if desired.
- Gently massage the breast starting from the chest moving toward the nipple; do this in a circle (near the underarm, and then to the bottom of the breast), so that all parts of the breast are massaged.
- Lean forward and support the bottom of the breast with one hand.
- Hold the areola between the thumb and two fingers of the other hand as shown here.
- Press toward the chest (about 1-2 cm) and then squeeze the milk reservoirs beneath the areola. Do not squeeze the nipple.





- Press and release the thumb and first finger several times until the milk drips out. Use a clean bottle or a cup to collect the milk. Milk may drip at the beginning and then spray out after it starts flowing.
- Rotate the thumb and fingers around the areola so that the milk is removed from all the reservoirs.
- Repeat with the other breast.
- Use a spoon to feed this milk to the baby.





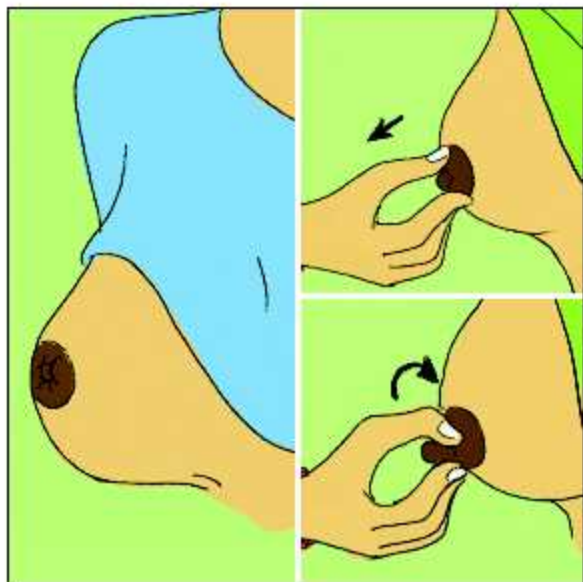
Managing problems

Problem: Sore nipples

What to do:

- Make sure the baby's mouth is attached properly to the breast while feeding.
- Continue to breastfeed. Put a little breast milk on nipples after feeding and let it dry.
- Wash the breast once a day with plain water.
- Wear loose clothing.
- If the nipples are very red, flaky, shiny and itchy, and remain sore even after taking these measures, then it is a sign of infection. Apply gentian violet paint to nipples after each breastfeed, for five days.
- Consult a doctor if the condition does not improve despite all these measures.





Problem: Inverted nipples

What to do:

- Gently pull out the nipple and roll it. Do this several times a day.





Problem: Not enough milk

What to do:

- First of all, check if there is a problem by finding out whether baby shows signs of not getting enough milk (not gaining sufficient weight, not passing sufficient urine, not satisfied after feeds, etc.). If there is a problem, the best way to deal with it is to breastfeed more often; the more the baby feeds, the more milk is produced.
- Make sure the baby's position while breastfeeding is correct.
- The mother needs a nutritious diet and adequate rest. This will keep her healthy and also ensure enough milk for the baby.





Problem: Engorged and painful breasts

What to do:

- Begin breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth. Feed as often as the baby demands it, making sure the baby is attached properly to the breast.
- If the baby is not able to attach properly, express some milk; then put the baby to the breast, making sure the position is correct, and begin breastfeeding.
- Breastfeed frequently. If required, express some milk to empty out the breasts.
- Continue breastfeeding even if breasts are red and hard. Use a warm compress and gently massage breasts towards the nipple.
- Consult a doctor if the mother has fever. Even if the mother takes antibiotics for fever, she should continue breastfeeding.









