

FEEDING

Breast Feeding – If you have decided to breast feed your baby, you will find it to be a most satisfying and rewarding experience. It is convenient, requires minimum preparation and equipment and is certainly the most inexpensive form of feeding. We support your decision to breast feed and will do all that we can to help make it successful experience for you and your baby. Relax, get to know your baby and do not worry if it takes the first few days for the two of you to get together. At first it is very difficult to figure out how to comfortably get your baby to your nipple. Some tips for the breast-feeding mother are listed below:

1. Take care of yourself! Get plenty of rest, wear a good supportive bra, eat a well balanced diet, take in plenty of fluids and continue taking your prenatal vitamins.

2. Relax and find a comfortable nursing position. This may be difficult if you have a sore bottom or a C-Section incision. Do not be shy about asking the nurses or us for assistance.

3. Your breasts may be tender for the first day or so but, your milk supply is established and it becomes easier for the baby to nurse, your nipples will toughen and the tenderness will subside.

4. Gently touch your nipple to the corner of his mouth or cheek and give him time to search for it. You might need to use your free hand to guide the nipple into his mouth. Do not force his head toward your breast.

5. It may help to express a small amount of milk before the baby starts to nurse. This gives him a taste and may heighten his interest in feeding. It also may make the areola a little less tense and thus easier to place in his mouth.

6. Begin nursing around five minutes on each side until milk comes in, which is normally 3 to 5 days. Then build up to around 15 minutes per breast.

7. Get plenty of rest. Expect feedings to be more frequent in the afternoons and also expect “growth spurts” every few weeks during which your baby will feed more often. This is normal and does not mean that your milk is too weak.

8. When the baby has finished nursing and you want to remove him from the breast, break the suction by placing your finger into the side of his mouth.

9. Do not nurse in front of a large crowd at first. Go off by yourself if necessary to obtain some privacy. Also, do not be worried if a well meaning relative is worried that he is not getting enough milk. We will follow his weight gain and you should not be concerned just because you do not know how many ounces of milk the baby has taken. Give us a call if you feel that your baby is not being satisfied by your milk.

10. We do not have our breast feeding mothers avoid certain foods. However, if certain foods do tend to upset either you or your baby, please just avoid eating them for a while.

11. Breast milk is normally thin in appearance. Do not be alarmed if the milk does not look “rich enough”.

12. In the hospital after delivery, some women choose to skip a nighttime feeding in order to get some extra sleep. When this happens, the nursery will generally use a solution of 5 percent glucose (sugar) water to replace the missed feeding. This satisfies the infant without suppressing his appetite at the next breast-feeding. Formula should be substituted for breast-feeding only when absolutely necessary during the first three weeks. Once breast-feeding is going well and the milk supply is established, you may decide to use an occasional bottle of expressed milk or formula such as Enfamil with iron so you can be away during some feedings.

13. It is never necessary to provide extra water to breast-fed infants at home because breast milk contains plenty of free water.

14. If your doctor prescribes medications for you, make sure that he/she knows you are breast-feeding. Some commonly used medications felt by the

American Academy of Pediatrics to be compatible with breast-feeding include: acetaminophen, penicillin, erythromycin, stool softeners, antihistamines, cough drops, nose drops, and skin creams. If you have concerns about any other medications you are taking, please call our office during office hours and we will guide you.

15. Expressed milk may be stored in a thoroughly washed container in the freezer compartment of the kitchen refrigerator for up to a month. Thaw the milk by first moving it to the refrigerator for a couple of hours and then holding it under warm running water until it thaws.

16. Your baby will develop a routine feeding schedule around six weeks of age. Until then, he will feed around every 2 – 4 hours. Do not feed him too frequently, that is more than every 2 hours as a rule.

17. Hopefully you will continue to breast-feed as long as you want to, but occasionally you will have to go back to a job/activity, which will make this task difficult. If this is the case, please call us and we will talk to you about a system where you can breast-feed in the morning and after work while using expressed milk or formula while at work.

Bottle Feeding – Feeding is a most pleasant experience and you should use it as an opportunity to express your love. Sit in a comfortable chair and hold the baby close so that you are face – to – face. Experiment with pillows and different positions during your hospital stay while your bottom may be sore. Never prop the bottle and leave the baby – it is not safe and certainly is not friendly. Do not get into the habit of putting the baby to bed with a bottle. This habit can cause very serious tooth decay in later months.

Hold your baby upright and burp him after each feeding or more frequently if he is having gas problems. If the burp doesn't come up easily, lay them on their back for a minute and then return them to a sitting position while gently stroking or patting their back. Do not be alarmed if he spits up some formula, unless the vomiting is continuous or very forceful in nature.

Let the baby tell you how much formula he/she wants. Overfeeding leads to obese babies who spit up frequently. At first the baby will take 2 – 3 ounces per feeding and gradually increase to 6 – 7 ounces per feeding by four months in age. Twenty-five to thirty-five ounces of formula per day is generally sufficient for most infants. There are many commercial formulas available, which will supply all the nutrients and water your child will need. Additional vitamins are not needed unless specifically prescribed by your doctor.

Sterilization of bottles and nipples is not necessary if you receive city water, but extreme cleanliness is important. If there is a possibility that your water source could be contaminated, sterilization of bottles and nipples should be performed. Water used to mix formula should be boiled if you have a well or cistern water source. Be sure to carefully read the preparation instructions on each can of formula. **Solid Feeding** – We strongly suggest that the baby remain on the breast milk or formula for the first year of life, as this provides him with the best nutritional source during this critical period of development. At around 4 – 6 months of age, sometimes later, most infants can begin to chew and swallow solid foods. If you feel your child needs solid before 4 – 6 months of age, or he is taking consistently greater than 35 ounces of formula per day, please give us a call during regular office hours. You may receive peer pressure to start solids at a very early age for a number of reasons, but talk to us at the well child visits before taking such advice too seriously.