A word on allergies

As a general rule, no food should be eliminated from your diet but if you think that a food might be affecting your baby and is unnecessary, best to talk to your family doctor. Mothers with a history of allergy benefit from avoiding any of the foods that are commonly associated with allergy such as cow’s milk, nuts and corn, shellfish, wheat and citrus fruits. Try eliminating any of these foods, one at a time, and see if your baby’s condition improves. It may take up to ten days for it to clear from your baby’s system. The good news is that breastfeeding lessens your baby’s chance of developing a sensitivity or allergy towards these foods later in life.

Caféines may cause your baby to become irritable and restless. Reducing your intake of coffee, tea, cola drinks and chocolate may reduce your baby’s irritability.

**For further help and assistance**

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<tr>
<th>Parentcraft Classes</th>
<th>Tel: 2545 5124</th>
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<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding Walk in Clinic</td>
<td>Tel: 2545 4445</td>
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<td>Tel: 2545 4447</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWDNA (Community Midwifery)</td>
<td>Tel: 21 387 526</td>
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<tr>
<td>Association of Breastfeeding Counsellors (ABC)</td>
<td>Tel: 21 494 766</td>
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<td>Media: 9893 7710</td>
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*The information has been translated by Mrs. Angela Bang (Breastfeeding Consultant) with the cooperation of the Lumière Park (Health Promotion Unit). Design and photography by Mr. Eddie Bodo.*
How often do I need to feed my baby?

Ideally breastfeeding should be on demand for the first few days, whenever and as long as your baby wants. In the first 24 – 48 hours babies do not tend to feed very often but then become quite demanding for a day or two to catch-up. Following this feeding pattern; breastfeeding can last up to 18 months and for longer if you and your baby want to continue. The baby should feed at least 8 – 12 times in 24 hours, although more often than not, young babies tend to feed more frequently. Your baby can feed even up to 14 times in 24 hours.

My baby is having a bowel movement every 3 days. Is my baby constipated?

There is a wide variation in bowel movements of breastfed babies. There may vary from ten times a day to once a week. Your baby is unlikely to be constipated provided there is an adequate number of wet nappies (about 4 if wet nappies in 24 hours) and if milk supply comes in i.e. baby is feeding well and is gaining adequate weight and the consistency of the stools is yellowish, rather loose and soft. When bowel movements are less frequent, they should be abundant.

Do I need to change breast during a feed?

No. At the start of the feed the milk does not contain much fat. This type of milk is known as foremilk and it comprises your baby’s first feed. As the feed progresses, the fat content of human milk increases and it is known as hindmilk. Hindmilk satisfies your baby’s hunger. When your baby shape your breast appropriately, appearing satisfied, offer your second breast, which may or may not be accepted.

What should I eat when breastfeeding?

You should keep on eating a varied, well-balanced diet in the right proportion that includes the following:

- At least five portions of varied vegetables and fruit per day
- Saturated foods such as wholemeal bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. These should always accompany each of the main meals. Choose wholemeal or wholewheat varieties for plenty of food fibre
- Fish can also be obtained by consuming legumes (beans, peas and lentils)
- Full-fat dairy products (such as milk, yogurt and cheese)
- Fruits and vegetables are rich in vitamins, and minerals that are essential for the growth of your baby
- Milk and breast milk are rich in calcium and are a source of protein too.
- Drink plenty of fluids especially water; it is wise to have a small bottle of water when you are breastfeeding

Here are some ideas for a healthy snack to give you energy and strength:

- Fresh fruit (1 medium sized fruit in one portion)
- Bananas or honeydew with vegetable sticks or wholemeal bread
- Vegetables and bean soup
- A small tub of yoghurt
- Two slices of wholemeal bread with tuna, tomatoes and green salad
- A small amount of fruit, e.g. apricots, figs or prunes
- A glass of milk or a glass of fresh juice or a glass of freshly squeezed seasonal fruit juice
- Porridge or cereal based wholegrain savoury (30-45g) with milk

To find more information on food portion sizes, you may wish to refer to our guidelines booklet Healthy eating for a healthy weight.

Do I need to give extra fluids in between breastfeeding?

Breast milk contains all the fluids a baby needs even in very hot weather. Juices and tea are not required before six months even if parents state otherwise.

Is nipple soreness normal?

Some nipple soreness is normal in the first few days but there should be no signs of damaged skin or bleeding. This would suggest the baby is not being well positioned at the breast.

How can I tell if my baby is latch-on properly?

Comfortable eating: Comfortable eating is an important reassurance you have your feet firm on the ground whilst keeping your back straight. Sit in a comfortable position prior to `latching-on’ your baby to your breast.

Positioning of your baby: Your baby’s shoulders and chest should be turned towards the breast. Your baby’s nose should be level with your nipples. Then lower your baby’s face with your nipples and as your baby opens the mouth wide, bring your baby towards it. Your baby should have a mouthful of your breast. Check whether your baby is sucking effectively or simply comfort-sucking on your nipples. Always bring your baby to your breast never take your breast to your baby. Once latched you will see some areola (areola is the brown circle surrounding the nipple) by your baby’s upper lip but you should see much less, near the bottom lip.

Check list for breastfeeding your infant successfully

Good Attachment
- Baby should be straight (not bent or twisted)
- Baby should be facing breast, start with nose to nipple (looking up at mother’s eyes)
- Baby’s mouth should be wide open
- Baby’s lips ‘U’ should be turned out
- Baby’s chin should be touching your breast

Effective Sucking
- Slow deep sucks, occasionally pausing

Good Position
- Baby’s head should be straight
- Baby’s head should be close to mother’s body
- Baby’s shelf should be supported (not just the head, or the bottom)

My baby is 4 days old. Why have my breasts become very uncomfortable?

This normal discomfort means that your milk has come in. It usually lasts for around 3 days after which your breast becomes softer and comfortable. Engorgement occurs when the breast becomes very hard, lics a stone, and is very painful. It can be the result of giving bottles at the ages when the mature milk comes in or by abruptly stopping breastfeeding. Some mothers may even experience engorgement as a result of irregular breastfeeding times. The best relief occurs with feeding your baby and then applying warm and cold compresses to your breast between feeds. Expressing small quantities of milk, approx 10cc, whenever your breast feels painful, relieves it, and keeps your nipples and areola soft so that your baby can form a seal for feeding.

My baby is 4 days old. Why have my breasts become very uncomfortable?