

BREASTFEEDING BASICS

BREASTMILK IS THE PERFECT FOOD!

This brief is designed with tips to support you on your breastfeeding journey and to help you find ways to **make breastfeeding work for you and your baby.**

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding makes your baby stronger and healthier, and it benefits you as well!

Breastmilk contains antibodies and hormones that are key to protecting your baby from disease and illness. Your breastmilk is unique and adapts to satisfy your growing baby's needs.

BENEFITS TO BABY

Lowers your baby's risk of:

- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Fussiness and digestion problems from diarrhea, vomiting, and spit up
- Ear infections and lower respiratory infections
- Asthma
- Eczema (atopic dermatitis)
- Type 2 diabetes
- Leukemia

BENEFITS TO YOU

- Aids healing
- Lowers risks of developing type 2 diabetes
- Lowers risks of developing certain types of breast cancer
- Lowers risks of developing ovarian cancer
- Helps you get your pre-pregnancy weight back faster!



PLANNING & LEARNING TO BREASTFEED

- Create a birth plan and communicate your plans to breastfeed with your doctor. **Learn about creating a birth plan here: [Blackwpc.org/bwpc-birth-plan](https://blackwpc.org/bwpc-birth-plan)**
- Get prenatal care as early in your pregnancy as possible
- Talk to your doctor about your health and any medications or supplements you're taking
- Ask your doctor to recommend a lactation consultant
- Take a breastfeeding class
- Get breastfeeding education/support from BWPC's Lactation Specialist. **Enroll today at [Blackwpc.org/services](https://blackwpc.org/services)**
- Talk to your doctor about Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and if your family planning/birth control choice will impact your milk supply

AFTER YOU GIVE BIRTH:

Steps you can take to get your breastfeeding experience off to a good start:

- Cuddle with your baby skin-to-skin right away after giving birth if you are able to
- Breastfeed as soon as possible after giving birth
- Ask the hospital staff not to give your baby pacifiers, sugar water, or formula, unless it is medically necessary
- Keep your baby in your hospital room so that you can breastfeed often. If you are medically separated from your baby, ask your care team to help you with a plan for frequent breastfeeding opportunities
- Ask for a lactation consultant to help you
- Try not to give your baby any pacifiers or artificial nipples until he or she is good at latching on to your breast (usually around 3 to 4 weeks old).

POSITIONS & LATCHING

Breastfeeding should not hurt! Finding the right position and a good latch will prevent pain and sore nipples.

There are many different positions to breastfeed your baby. Keep trying different positions until you and your baby are comfortable. **What works for one feeding may not work for the next feeding.** You can also use pillows under your arms, elbows, neck, or back to give you added comfort and support.

Learn about **more** positions at blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-positions-latching

The
Cradle
Hold →

The Clutch
or "Football"
Hold →



BREASTMILK COLOR CHANGES OVER TIME



FIRST MILK - DARK YELLOW

In the first 2-5 days after giving birth your first milk is called colostrum. This milk is often called "liquid gold" because of its high nutritional value, thick consistency, and deep yellow color.

Colostrum helps your baby grow and is very high in antibodies!



MATURE MILK (FOREMILK) - CLEAR/BLUISH

When the mature milk begins to flow out of your breasts at the beginning of a feeding or pumping session, it may look bluish/clear



TRANSITIONAL MILK - YELLOW / WHITE

A few days after you've produced colostrum your breast milk increases and the color typically changes from yellow to white



MATURE MILK (HINDMILK) - CREAMY/WHITE

As you continue to breastfeed, the fat content in your breast milk turns into creamier milk called hindmilk

YOUR BABY'S TUMMY IS TINY

At birth, your baby's tummy can **only** hold about **one or two teaspoons**. At around 10 days, your baby's stomach grows to hold about **one or two ounces**.

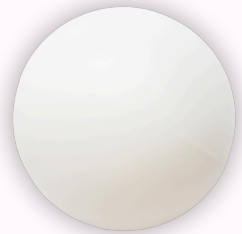
Three to five days after coming home from the hospital, you'll take your baby back to the doctor's office to make sure everything is on track. **Meanwhile, keep a record of your baby's dirty diapers and feedings**, so you can tell whether your baby is eating enough.

AT BIRTH



Toy Marble
about 1-2
teaspoons

DAY 10



Ping-pong Ball
about 1 -2 ounces

GET TO KNOW YOUR BABY'S HUNGER CUES

Babies are born with the ability to communicate. They use cues to show parents what they need. **When your baby is hungry, they may:**

- Keep their hands near their mouth
- Bend their arms and legs
- Make sucking noises
- Pucker their lips
- Search for the nipple

PARTNER & CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Partners and caregivers can ensure you feel supported by helping with household tasks, newborn care, providing nutritious snacks, and offering skin-to-skin contact with your baby. They should work with you to address challenges together and encourage professional help if needed, especially for breastfeeding or postpartum depression concerns.

blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-your-baby-supporting-your-partner

A NOTE ABOUT BREASTFEEDING IN THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU)

While in the NICU, you might not be able to feed your baby directly from your breast. Ask your provider for a prescription to receive human breastmilk! When your baby is ready, you will be able to begin to practice breastfeeding.

blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-your-preterm-baby

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES & DAILY LIFE

Breastfeeding comes with a variety of challenges and it's normal to feel frustrated when you're encountering obstacles, but **don't give up**. With practice and support you can learn how to manage various issues that may arise. For more information about common challenges like engorgement, mastitis, sore nipples and more visit blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-your-baby-challenges

Learning to incorporate breastfeeding into your life can be an adjustment. For questions about nutrition, exercise, sex life, drug use, alcohol and more visit:

blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-your-baby-lifestyle

BREASTFEEDING RIGHTS

You have the right to breastfeed your baby wherever and whenever your baby is hungry. If someone criticizes you for breastfeeding in public, **remember that the law protects your right to feed your baby** any location where you and your baby are authorized to be.

If you are returning to work make sure you know your rights and ask about available benefits and accommodations for breastfeeding parents. Federal law requires most employers to provide reasonable break time for breastfeeding employees in a place that is private, clean, and **not a bathroom**.

blackwpc.org/breastfeeding-your-baby-lifestyle