



هيئة أبوظبي
للطفولة المبكرة
Abu Dhabi Early
Childhood Authority



مركز أبوظبي
للصحة العامة
ABU DHABI PUBLIC
HEALTH CENTRE

Parents' Guide on Breastfeeding and Its Healthy Practices



Why breastfeeding Matters?

Benefits for Baby

Nutritional Benefits

Breast milk provides the perfect mix of vitamins, proteins, and fat.

Immune Support

Contains antibodies that help babies fight off viruses and bacteria.

Cognitive Development

Linked to higher IQ scores in later childhood.

Respiratory Risk

Exclusively breastfed babies have lower risks of respiratory infections, allergies, and asthma.

Disease Prevention

Breastfed babies have a lower risk of obesity, type 1 diabetes, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), stomach illnesses, and ear infections.



Benefits for Mother

Health Benefits

Breastfeeding reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and certain malignancies such as ovarian cancer and breast cancer.

Bonding

Promotes a strong emotional bond between mother and baby.

What to Expect

Milk Production

The body starts producing colostrum from mid-pregnancy (around 12–18 weeks) and continues to produce it for the first few days after birth.

Milk quantity typically increases rapidly on the 3rd day after birth.



Transition to Milk

Transitional milk occurs after colostrum and lasts for approximately two weeks.

Baby's Urination and Stool

For urine, expect 6 heavy wet diapers a day after the first week.

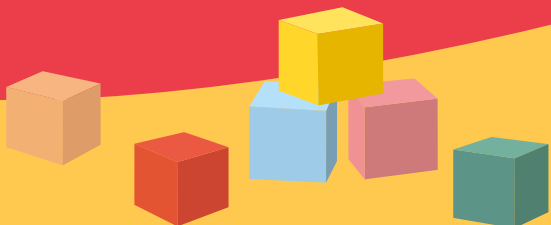
As for stool, during the first week to around six weeks, your baby may have six or more bowel movements a day. After six weeks, the frequency may decrease.

Colostrum

The first stage of breast milk that occurs during pregnancy and lasts for several days after the birth. It is either yellowish or creamy in color. It is also much thicker than the milk that is produced later in breastfeeding.

Feeding Frequency

Newborns typically feed every 1-2 hours in the first few days after birth, with each feeding session lasting 10 to 45 minutes.



Beneficial Practices

Ensure a good latch

- ◆ Baby's mouth should cover more of the areola, not just the nipple.
- ◆ Alternate breasts within the same feeding.

Hydration

- ◆ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ◆ Hydrate before, during, and after breastfeeding sessions.

Comfort and Positioning

- ◆ Use a comfortable chair with good back support.
- ◆ Use pillows to support your arms.
- ◆ Experiment with different breast feeding positions such as cradle, cross-cradle, football hold, side-lying.



Common Challenges and Solutions



Sore Nipples

- Ensure proper latch.
- Use a nipple cream or breast milk to soothe.
- Allow nipples to air dry after feeding.

Engorgement

- Nurse frequently to relieve pressure.
- Apply warm compresses for a couple of minutes only before feeding and cold compresses for 20 minutes after.
- Gently compress your breast with your hands if your baby is having difficulty breastfeeding.

Low Milk Supply

- Breastfeed or pump more frequently to stimulate production.
- Ensure proper hydration and nutrition.
- Try different feeding positions and check if the baby is latching properly.
- Consult a lactation specialist if issues persist.

Studies show that mothers who present with low-milk supply can address this challenge! Reach out to your healthcare provider and lactation consultants if you remain worried about your milk supply!



Remember



“Every drop counts
– you’re doing an amazing job!”

“It’s a learning process for both you and
your baby.”

“You’re not alone – help and support
are available.”

Tips

Rest Try to rest when your baby sleeps to maintain energy.

Diet Eat a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Support Seek help from lactation consultants, family, or breastfeeding support groups.



What the Mother May Be Experiencing



Physical Changes

Breast engorgement, nipple pain, fatigue and sleep deprivation

Emotional Changes

Mood swings, anxiety about milk supply, and the pressure to succeed.

Fathers can provide support. Breastfeeding can also feel lonely. Unless efforts are made to make your wife feel comfortable to feed before family and outside the home, it may be a period of tremendous isolation.



How Can the Father Support the Mother?

Educate Yourself

- Attend preparation to birth classes with your wife. Join her for visits to the pediatrician and lactation consultant after birth, and learn about breastfeeding basics and common challenges.

Be Patient and Encouraging

- Offer positive reinforcement and emotional support.

Help with Baby Care

- Change diapers, burp the baby, and help with nighttime routines.

Provide Practical Support

- Bring water, snacks, and a nursing pillow; handle household chores.

Moral Support from Family and Friends

- Discuss with your wife when they are comfortable to receive visitors and lead the coordination with family and friends.
- Support your wife in front of family and friends who are skeptical about breastfeeding; reassure them that you are following up on baby's breastfeeding journey and that all is well.
- Plan some couple-time after a few weeks. Arrange for close family members to babysit and do something special together.



Why Your Support Matters

Improved Family Dynamics

- ◆ A supportive father can create a more harmonious and cooperative family environment.
- ◆ Shared responsibilities can reduce stress and strengthen the relationship between the parents.

Enhanced Emotional Well-being

- ◆ The emotional support provided by fathers can lead to better mental health for mothers, contributing to a more positive and nurturing home environment.

Work-life Balance

- ◆ Fathers who actively support breastfeeding can help mothers balance their professional and personal lives, potentially leading to higher job satisfaction and performance for both parents.

Breastfeeding Duration

- ◆ Studies show that mothers are nearly 5 times more likely to continue breastfeeding at 6 months if fathers receive prenatal education about overcoming common breastfeeding difficulties.



Focus On

Communication

Ask how you can help and listen to her needs.

Team Effort

Your support makes a significant difference in your wife's breastfeeding journey.

Breastfeeding Journey

Your wife will require your ongoing support, well beyond the initial stages of parental leave.

