

Breastfeeding Basics

HOW OFTEN SHOULD MY BABY BREASTFEED?

About 6 times every 24 hours for the first 1-3 days of life. 8-12 times every 24 hours by day 3-5 (when your milk comes in).

HOW MANY MINUTES SHOULD MY BABY SPEND AT EACH BREAST?

Every baby is unique and different. Watch how your baby nurses. You should hear active swallowing throughout most of the feeding; especially once your milk “comes in”. Your baby should actively suck and swallow for at least 10-15 minutes on one breast. For some babies this will be enough, others will want to nurse from the second breast. Get to know your baby’s patterns and needs.

HOW DO I KNOW MY BABY IS GETTING ENOUGH TO EAT?

By the time your baby is 3-5 days old:

- ◆ Your baby should breastfeed 8-12 times every 24 hours.
- ◆ Your baby’s bowel movements should change from black to brown/green to seedy yellow.
- ◆ Your baby has 2-3 seedy yellow bowel movements every 24 hours.
- ◆ Your baby has 4-6 wet diapers per day.
- ◆ You hear swallowing with every suck or every other suck throughout the feeding.
- ◆ Your breasts feel full prior to a feed and softer after a feeding.
- ◆ By the time your baby is 2 weeks old, he/she should have regained birthweight and continue gaining at a rate of ° oz. to 1 oz. per day.

DANGER SIGNS:

- ◆ Sleepy baby who only sucks for a few minutes at a time.
- ◆ Little or no swallowing heard during a feeding.
- ◆ Baby feeding fewer than 8 times in 24 hours.
- ◆ Mother experiences no breast fullness by day 5.
- ◆ Baby still has black or dark brown stools on day 5.
- ◆ Mother has extremely sore nipples and breastfeeding is painful.

If you have concerns about how your baby is feeding, please call the Lactation Consultants at Botsford Breastfeeding Services (248) 471-8471. We are happy to provide telephone counseling, or you can schedule a weight check or outpatient consultation at our office based on the Family Centered Care Unit.