

Breastfeeding

Breast Milk: The Best Source of Nutrition for Baby

It will take time for you and your baby to develop a feeding routine. Try to stay patient. We know it can be hard, but you can do it! Your health provider and lactation consultants can help you.

- Feed only breast milk for the first 6 months. Continue breastfeeding while introducing soft solids.
- It is the perfect food for baby that only mom can provide.
- **Some breast milk is better than none.** If you are struggling to breastfeed, talk to your pediatrician about feeding options.
- Breast milk protects mom and baby's health long term.
- It's free.
- It creates wonderful bonding for mom and baby that lasts a lifetime.

** Avoid feeding juice, cow's milk, or cow's milk alternative. Beverages other than breast milk or formula may interfere with your baby's growth and development.*



How Often to Feed

Babies have small stomachs. They need to eat about every 2 to 3 hours (8-12 times in 24 hours). The exact amount and how often is different for each baby. Watch and listen for these different signs:

Signs of Hunger

- Flexes fists
- Sucks on fist
- Smacks lips
- Makes fussy sounds
- Turns head
- Restless after waking
- Crying is a very late hunger cue. Look for signs above for feeding.

Signs of Fullness

- Relaxes
- Closes lips
- Stops sucking
- Spits nipple out
- Turns head away

Mom's Health

- Stay hydrated. Keep a glass of water nearby.
- Breastfeeding takes lots of energy. You may find you are hungrier than usual. Have healthy snacks on hand.
- Ask your doctor and check with <https://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/newtoxnet/lactmed.htm> on any medications you are taking.
- Do not smoke. However, if you are not able to quit or are working on quitting, breastfeeding is still recommended. It protects your baby from health problems caused by parent smoking, including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Mom's Health (Continued)

- Avoid drinking alcohol while breastfeeding. If you have an occasional drink, delay breastfeeding for 2-3 hours.
- Breastfeeding is not advised if you are using or dependent on illicit drugs. These drugs will harm you and baby.

Returning to Work

- Make a plan to continue breastfeeding when you return to work.
- Get a good pump. Pumps are often available through local hospitals, private insurance and Medicaid.
- Ask your employer about a private space to pump.
- Talk to your child care providers about feeding schedules, safely storing breast milk and any routines and tips they have for the transition.
- For more information, contact your insurance provider or your local WIC clinic at 1-800-755-GROW (4769), or your local lactation consultants in Ohio at: <http://www.ohio-olca.org/> or <http://www.ohio-olca.org/find-an-ibclc.html>.

Hang in there! The first few weeks back at work can be stressful with a new baby. Allow time to adjust to breastfeeding and working before making any big decisions. Breastfeeding may not always be easy, but it is always worth it.

Want more info? Go to our mobile app at PMP.ohioaap.org

Tips for Expressing and Storing Breast Milk*

- Before breastfeeding, wash your hands with soap and water. If unable, use hand sanitizer.
- Do not store milk in disposable bottle liners or plastic bags not intended for storing breast milk.
- Before storing, write the date the milk was expressed.
- Freeze milk in small amounts (approximately 2-4 ounces).
- See general guidelines for storing breast milk. These are general time frames and can be impacted by factors like room temperature and milk amount.

Human Milk Storage Guidelines*

Type of Breast Milk	Storage Locations and Temperatures		
	Counter top 77°F or colder (25°C) (room temperature)	Refrigerator 40 °F (4°C)	Freezer 0°F or colder (-18°C)
Freshly Expressed or Pumped	Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Within 6 months is best. Up to 12 months is acceptable
Thawed, Previously Frozen	1-2 hours	Up to 1 day (24 hours)	Never refreeze human milk after it has thawed
Leftover from a Feeding (baby did not finish the bottle)	Use within 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding		

Adapted from “ABM Clinical Protocol #8: Human Milk Storage Information for Home Use for Full-Term Infants,” Revised 2017

*The storage guidelines and tips are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website “Proper Storage and Preparation of Breast Milk” found at:
https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm

