

making milk © 2023



a resource for parents, (formerly titled 'Mother's Milk, Babies Choice'), created by Saskatchewan parents and health care professionals with special thanks to the mothers at Motherhood YXE and breastfeeding peer supporters at the Saskatoon Mothers' Centre



TIME TO SETTLE IN

Weeks 2 - 6

'*Making Milk*' is a series of pamphlets available in printable digital format via QR access below or can be found on the *Saskatoon Breastfeeding Matters* website. With valuable feedback from professionals and parents like you, the series includes basic current information about breastfeeding and providing breastmilk for your new baby from the first days to first steps and beyond.

Phase Two: Weeks 2 - 6 explores what can be expected, growth spurts, mom care, latch review, vitamin D, diet, family planning & more!

See links throughout for more information!

The terms breastfeeding and mother may be used. However, we acknowledge that individuals may prefer the term chestfeeding parent rather than breastfeeding mother. We also understand that birthing parents can include cisgendered women, transgendered men and non-binary persons. Caregivers will want to use affirming language when providing care. Please let your caregiver know how you would like to be addressed.

If you or your baby have unique circumstances or challenges, additional support and information may be needed. Talk to your Health Care Provider or International Board Certified Lactation Consultant.

Congratulations!

Scan here for digital access to this and the next phases from birth to two years and beyond



It is your decision to provide your milk, but it will always be Baby's Choice!

BREASTFEEDING IS HEALTHY FOR MOM & BABY!

Breastfeeding is a physical activity that improves your body's metabolism the same way exercise does. It also helps stabilize insulin levels if you have had gestational diabetes. Losing the weight you gained will happen more easily if you breastfeed often and avoid introducing your baby to formula or solid foods before six months.

These metabolic changes continue as you nurse your baby into the second year and beyond





WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

Your baby's stomach size is increasing from the size of a walnut to the size of an egg. Small feeds keep baby more comfortable and growing well. Let your baby guide how often and how long he nurses (at least 8 times in 24 hours supports baby's milk supply).

Baby's first weeks are spent mostly feeding and sleeping. This window of time is when your body builds more milk-making cells and establishes your milk supply! After this time, your milk-making capacity stays pretty constant and your let downs are a little less hormone driven. Your baby will be ready to take a more active roll in removing your milk. If feeds are not comfortable or you or baby are frustrated at the breast, seek out skilled breastfeeding help.



MILK IS DIFFERENT AT EVERY FEED!

Breasts may seem fuller in the mornings. The volume of milk decreases over the day while the fat in the milk increases. The reduced volume is likely why baby may want to feed more often in the evening. This is called 'cluster feeding'. Side lying or laid back positions can be relaxing for these frequent feeds.

*The extra sucking, cuddling and creamier milk at the end of the day is very satisfying to baby...
You may notice a sleep stretch of up to 5 hours after cluster feeds
You can sleep too!*



THINGS ARE ON TRACK WHEN...

Baby starts to gain weight by day 5 and regains birth weight by 10-14 days. Well-baby weight checks with baby's Doctor or Public Health Nurse provide reassurance and guidance when required.

Your Health Care Provider will assess baby's growth trend based on the international WHO Growth Charts. Growth patterns are monitored over time. Trending baby's growth shows successful establishment of feeding or where further assessment and guidance may be needed.



WHAT IS A GROWTH SPURT?

Babies grow in spurts. The first *growth spurt* occurs within 2 to 3 weeks after birth. Baby will cue to feed more often in response to growth needs. This can be a challenging time but is an important time to establish full breastfeeding. *You are making cells that make milk and building your capacity for a good milk supply.*

Growth spurts last only a few days. Your milk will adjust to match baby's needs. Try to go with the flow...

*Remember
it's normal for baby to feed even more often during a growth spurt. This is not a good time to introduce a supplement.
Follow your baby!*



YOUR MILK IS ALL BABY NEEDS!

Your breastmilk is all your healthy full term baby needs. Baby was born with stores of nutrients including *iron* which will last until baby starts eating solids between 6 and 9 months. Others may suggest foods to feed your baby earlier, such as sugar water, traditional newborn foods, formula, baby food or infant cereal. *These extra foods are not appropriate for baby's immature gut and will interfere with establishing your milk supply as well as keep your baby from getting all the benefits of your milk.*

Your milk is always adjusting to baby's needs... It is exactly what is needed to help develop baby's maturing gut and immune system. Breastmilk also provides antibodies to germs mom or baby are exposed to.

Morning, noon & night, hot or cold weather, your breastmilk is perfect!

IF BABY SEEMS UNCOMFORTABLE...

There are usually no foods for mom to avoid while breastfeeding. However, sometimes moms discover that some foods in their diet affect their nursing infants. For example, too much caffeine may make baby wakeful and irritable.

If your baby is regularly distressed or regurgitates more than a little milk after most feeds or seems especially gassy and unhappy, it may be because baby is drinking a lot of milk *FAST*. Try feeding with your baby in a more upright position such as football hold (beside you) or laid back position and take lots of breaks to rest and burp. Baby will get the feeling of fullness *BEFORE* taking too much milk too fast and will likely be more comfortable. See [Making Milk: Week One](#) for feeding positions.

If baby has mucous or blood in poos, poos that go back to green color, skin rash, persistent nasal congestion, unhappy baby, grimaces and grunting while sleeping, talk to your Doctor or Public Health Nutritionist for guidance. Continue breastfeeding.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY TOO MOM

Your hunger and thirst are signals that your body is producing milk!

- Small, frequent healthy meals keep your energy up
- Drink (water, juice, soup, dairy/nut/oat milk) at each meal and when feeding baby to keep up your fluids.
- You're drinking well if your urine is pale in color



BASIC FOODS FOR MOM... BEST RECIPE FOR BREASTMILK

Time flies by while tending to baby... moms say they may miss meals, have low energy and worry about milk supply. Stock your pantry with simple, healthy foods that can be snacked on throughout the day and night. Even peanut butter on a banana or apple with a glass of dairy or nut milk is a nourishing snack.

DO I HAVE TO DRINK MILK TO MAKE MILK?

No. It is just easier to get calcium and vitamin D if you drink milk or eat dairy products. Fortified plant beverages can replace dairy foods in your diet. If you have concerns about meeting your dietary needs, there's support. Reach out to your Public Health Nutritionist or a Dietitian.

*Listen to your body... rest, drink to thirst, healthy foods
Follow your baby's feeding cues...
hands to mouth, searching, drooling*

BREASTFEEDING FINANCIAL HELP

If you are presently receiving social assistance there is an extra food allowance for you while you are breastfeeding. Contact your Social Worker or Public Health Nurse for more information.

*The taste of your milk is changed by the foods you eat...
This variety introduces your baby to new flavors!*



LOOKING AFTER MOM

Learning to breastfeed is work for both you and baby! It is the physical work of feeding your baby often, day and night, along with caring for and comforting your baby. It is also the emotional work of parenting and becoming a family.

Rest and sleep when you can. Take time for yourself. Your body is healing and getting used to this care work. Your body's way of dealing with this is to increase your need for sleep. The hormones of breastfeeding will make you feel relaxed and sleepy as well.

Keep the time when your baby sleeps for yourself. Be patient with your recovery. It can take weeks and months. It's OK to accept offers of help with meals and chores.

You may feel a strain in your physical relationship with your partner. There may not even be the time to talk about your day, let alone think about being intimate. You may have to re-learn how to be physical with each other.

Notice if you are feeling tired, lonely, or sad. Reach out to your partner, your family, friends, and to other nursing families for support through these life changes. Find a local mom group or activities like mom & baby yoga or music programs.

If low mood persists, please reach out to your Health Care Provider for help, or simply call 811

1 in 5 parents need more support



SAFE SUNLIGHT & VITAMIN D

Mothers need vitamin D. Direct sunshine is the normal way for the skin to make vitamin D. In Saskatchewan during April to October, it will take 10-15 minutes per day in the sun without sun block. Cover your head and expose your arms and legs. This will give you enough vitamin D during the summer. You will need to get vitamin D from your diet or a supplement during the winter months.

Health Canada recommends keeping your baby under a year out of direct sunlight. This means that a vitamin D supplement of 400-800 IU is needed. Check with your doctor for the dosage your baby needs. Give this supplement daily. Start vitamin D within the first month after birth. Continue until your child is a year old or until consuming 400 IU from a dietary source. *Your Public Health Nurse is a great resource. Ask questions at your 'well baby check' & immunization visits!*

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY BABY'S DEVELOPMENT?

Safe in your or another loved one's arms or close by allows your relaxed baby to start taking in the world

- Your baby loves faces! Interact and smile, sing and gently rock baby. Baby learns to mimic your smiles and sounds. This is the beginning of socialization and language.
- Brief periods of tummy time at diaper changes and on your chest or safe surface helps strengthen baby's neck, shoulder and core muscles. Tummy time, gentle baby massage, and supported movement helps baby discover a sense of space and balance.
- By Mother Nature's design, babies continue to feed often day and night, and sleep patterns can be very varied the first 3 months. 'Sleep Training' is not appropriate. This time is for building the milk supply!

BREASTFEEDING COMFORT TIPS

Remember to practice optimal positioning at the breast. Continue to support the breast if baby cannot maintain a comfortable deep latch without your help. Go back to *'Making Milk: Birth Week'* pamphlet for review of positioning basics.

Make it easy, adjust for comfort, move the milk

If your nipples are tender, rub in some of your hand expressed milk and allow the nipples to air dry. Choose cotton bras and change breast pads often if you are leaking milk. Avoid soap on your nipples. Trying another position can help.

Some mothers leak breastmilk while feeding or when they think of their baby. This can be common in the early weeks. You can press your hand firmly into your breast to stop the flow. Nursing pads in your bra can help you keep your clothing dry (paper tissues next to the nipple are too rough). If your nipple sticks to your clothing or nursing pad, moisten it with water to gently release.

Persistent sore or damaged nipples need to be investigated... Seek help from your Public Health Nurse or Board Certified Lactation Consultant



FAMILY PLANNING

Becoming pregnant while your baby is very young can lead to problems with your milk supply. Use a birth control method that can protect your breastfeeding relationship.

Exclusive breastfeeding, day and night, may keep you from becoming pregnant during the first 6 months. You will need to breastfeed following the Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM). Check out the link below and discuss family planning options with your Health Care Provider for help deciding what family planning method is best for you.



WEAR YOUR BABY



PURPLE CRYING

It can be very stressful for parents if baby doesn't respond to comfort measures. Some babies have inconsolable lengthy crying spells that can start at 3 weeks and last to 3 months in an otherwise healthy baby. This is called *'purple crying'*. This can be a challenging time and babies can be at risk of being shaken by a frustrated caregiver.

It's OK to lay baby down in a safe place and remove yourself for a few minutes to calm down, then return to baby



Scan here for all the Making Milk series from birth to two years and beyond