

Breastfeeding Basics

Getting Started with Breastfeeding Basics

Wash your hands before feeding.

Nipples need not be washed before each feeding but should always be clean. Cracked nipples can occur from using soap, alcohol, witch hazel, antiseptics and petroleum jelly (Vaseline).

Begin breastfeeding as soon after your delivery as possible.

The earlier breastfeeding begins the sooner digestive activity begins. The sooner the baby receives colostrum, the earlier mother's milk will come in.

Breastfeed your newborn frequently.

The baby should not go beyond three to four hours between nursing. This increases milk supply, promotes complete emptying of the breast, promotes better weight gain in the infant and reduces engorgement. The baby will space feedings more as he/she gets older, but new babies need to feed at least eight to 12 times every 24 hours.

Offer both breasts at each feeding.

This increases milk supply, promotes better weight gain in the infant and reduces engorgement.

Try to burp your baby when you switch from one breast to the other.

Breastfed babies do not swallow as much air as bottle-fed babies and may not burp at every feeding.