

## Babies are born to be breastfed!

After your baby is born, the baby will be placed on your tummy: skin-to-skin contact is the best place for your baby after birth. Follow your baby's lead. The first hour is the perfect time to breastfeed. Nurses are available to help you and your baby learn to breastfeed. Be patient with yourself and your baby as you learn this skill.

It is important to feed your baby breast milk only during the first six months after birth. Your baby needs only breast milk. There is no need for formula, water, or juice for this time period, unless your healthcare provider specifically instructs you to do so.

Breast milk is all the nutrition your baby needs.

Frequent breastfeeding encourages the production of breast milk. Many moms worry about having "enough milk". Your breasts will make as much milk as needed. The more often your baby feeds and takes in milk, the more milk you will make.

Find a comfortable position that supports a good latch. Your baby needs to feel supported and close to you, and you should feel comfortable.

## Benefits for baby

- Breast milk helps protect babies from ear infections, colds, and flu
- Breast milk helps protect babies from obesity
- Reduces the risk of Type 2 Diabetes for both mother and baby
- Reduces your baby's risk of food allergy and tooth decay
- Breast milk is easily digested, reducing the risk of constipation and diarrhea
- It is the perfect food for premature babies and infants in their first year of life
- Reduces healthcare costs
- Reduces the impact on the environment

## Benefits for mom

- It shrinks the uterus and helps stop bleeding after birth
- Breastfeeding helps the Mom to lose weight after the baby is born
- Less risk of breast and ovarian cancers
- Breastfeeding is convenient, always warm, fresh and the perfect nutrition

## Is breastfeeding easy?

- Once breastfeeding is established, it is easy. Breastfeeding is a learned skill. You, your body and the baby may need time to get adjusted.
- Breastfeeding should not be painful, although your nipples may be sensitive at first.
- You are giving your baby a gift that only you can give. You can do this!
- Being a mother is a new journey with each baby. It is normal to worry a little and wonder. Talking to a lactation consultant, a supportive friend, mother, or aunt can help you begin this journey into motherhood.

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# BREASTFEEDING: It's Best for your Baby



- Nurture yourself as you would nurture your baby. Be patient with yourself as you and your baby learn together.
- A supportive partner can ease your breastfeeding journey.

## Are there reasons to say no to breastfeeding?

Women who do not have health problems should try to give their babies breast milk for at least six months of life. There are some cases when it is better not to breastfeed. If you have HIV or active tuberculosis, you should not breastfeed because you could pass the infection to your baby. Certain medicines-including pain medication, illegal drugs, and alcohol can also pass through the breast milk and cause harm to your baby.

## How do I get started?

While you are pregnant, tell your health care provider that you want to breastfeed. Ask women in your community who breastfed to share their stories. Sign up for a breastfeeding class at Community Medical Center or WIC. Read a book on breastfeeding.

Do not let people try to talk you out of breastfeeding. Breast milk is better for your baby than any baby formula. If you breastfeed, you will not have to worry about buying formula. If you plan to return to work, you can collect, store and give your breast milk in a bottle to your baby when you are unable to breastfeed because you are at work or school. A healthy breastfed baby does not require any other fluids or fluid supplementation. Breast milk provides the infant with adequate fluids. All infants can become dehydrated in hot weather or after bouts of diarrhea. Consult your healthcare provider before giving your infant any fluid supplementation other than breast milk as appropriate.

***Remember: Breastfed babies are healthy babies!***

Community Medical Center Lactation Services: (406) 327-4219  
National Breastfeeding Hotline: 1-800-994-9662