

Breastfeeding Planning Ahead During Pregnancy



Make Plans

- Make sure that both your doctor and your baby's doctor will support your plan to breastfeed.
- Organize family and friends now to help with meals and housework after you are home with the baby.
- Talk with your employer about maternity leave and how to support your breastfeeding once you have returned to work.
- Tour the hospital to learn about their policies and the staff who help with breastfeeding.

Breast Care

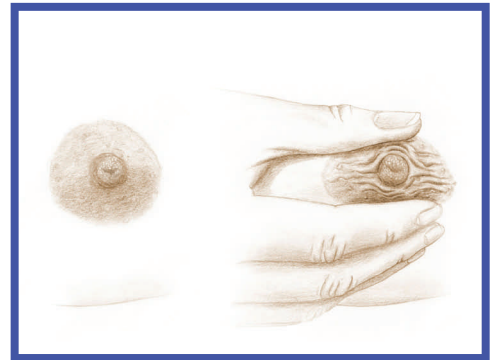
- Your breasts should naturally get larger during your pregnancy. If they don't, talk with your doctor, nurse, lactation consultant or nutritionist.
- Shower or bathe as usual. Use lotion for dry skin or stretch marks.
- Breasts may leak after the 20th week of pregnancy. This is normal. The fluid is colostrum, your first milk.
- During your third trimester, get a comfortable bra for the rest of the pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Nipple Care

- Shower or bathe as usual.
- Your nipples will get darker and possibly bigger during your pregnancy. This is normal.
- "Outie" nipples are easier for baby to latch onto because baby can feel the nipple in the mouth.
- "Flat" or "inverted" ("innie") nipples can be a bit more challenging because they are harder for babies to feel in the mouth. Reduce problems by keeping other things out of baby's mouth, like pacifiers or bottles.

Do the 'nipple pinch test'

- Make a 'C' shape with your right hand.
- Place your thumb and first finger around the areola.
- Push back against your chest.
- Gently squeeze the thumb and finger together.
- Use a mirror to look at a side view of both nipples as you do the pinch test.
- A normal ("outie") nipple will move forward.
- Flat or inverted nipples move back and inward. They may cause problems with breastfeeding. Get help before you deliver.

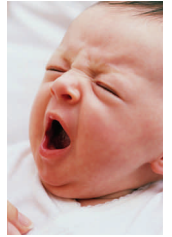


Learning Breastfeeding

- Learn about breastfeeding during your pregnancy:
 - ◆ Attend a class or mother-to-mother group meeting.
 - ◆ Talk with a lactation consultant, breastfeeding peer counselor, nurse or nutritionist.
 - ◆ Read books or pamphlets. View DVDs or videos.
 - ◆ Talk with friends or family who has had a good breastfeeding experience.
- The basic "how to's" of breastfeeding aren't hard, but do take practice.
 - ◆ Hold the baby close, facing the nipple. Support baby's body and head.
 - ◆ Have baby take a big mouthful of nipple and breast when latching on.
 - ◆ During breastfeeding there should be a tug on the breast, but not sharp pain.
 - ◆ You should hear baby swallowing during a feeding.
 - ◆ Most feedings last 15 to 45 minutes. Babies should feed every 1½ - 3 hours. This is about 8 to 12 times every 24 hours.

At the Hospital

- Make sure that all the staff know you want to breastfeed — the doctors and nurses in the delivery room, your room and the nursery on all shifts.
- Breastfeed your baby as soon as possible after delivery — within the first hour if you can.
- Keep baby in your room with you so you can learn feeding cues. Get to know the little coos and grunts that mean that baby is waking or hungry. Don't wait for them to cry.
- Put baby to breast at least every 1½ — 3 hours. Babies have small stomachs and need to eat often in the early weeks.
- Go to hospital breastfeeding classes or meet with a lactation consultant to make sure that you and baby are learning good breastfeeding skills.
- Help baby learn breastfeeding by staying away from pacifiers or bottles. Water or formula should not be needed unless there is a medical problem. Talk about it with your baby's doctor.
- Some medications used during childbirth can make you and baby sleepy. Wake the baby to feed every 1½ - 3 hours.
- Newborn babies may have their days and nights mixed up. Babies often wake in the night to feed. Keep baby in your room, even during the night, so you can hear the nighttime waking sounds.
- Hospital routines like photos, hearing tests and circumcision can upset babies—they might cry a lot or fall deeply asleep. Give them extra cuddling and breastfeeding to comfort them.
- Get help if breastfeeding hurts or the baby is not latching on well.



Birth Control

- It is best to avoid sex for 6 weeks after the baby is born. If necessary before 6 weeks, use barrier methods like condoms and gel/foam.
- Any hormonal birth control can limit your milk supply if started before 6 weeks postpartum. This includes pills, shots, patches and implants.
- After 6 weeks, if your milk supply is good and baby is growing well, you may be able to start progesterone birth control pills, shots or implants. Talk with your doctor.
- Estrogen birth control pills, rings and patches can block your milk supply. Wait to use until you are no longer breastfeeding.



Breastfeeding 'Equipment'

- Most moms don't need anything special to breastfeed.
- Wait to see what you really need.
- Breast pumps are not all the same. Talk with a nurse, nutritionist, or lactation consultant about the ones that are easiest and most comfortable. Wait until the baby is born before getting a pump.



For more information on breastfeeding, talk with your Nutritionist or Nurse and the Lactation Consultant at the hospital where you had your baby.