

# Getting Started with Breastfeeding



## In Hospital

- Tell all hospital staff you plan to breastfeed.
- Ask the hospital staff not to give your baby any bottles of water, formula or pacifiers.  
Babies suck differently on artificial nipples such as pacifiers and bottles. Wait until after the first month.
- Holding your baby skin-to-skin right after birth will give your baby the chance to breastfeed and to bond with you while he is most alert.
- Rooming-in with your baby will help you become familiar with hunger signals and your baby will be able to breastfeed as often as needed.
- Watch your baby for signs of hunger such as sucking on the hands, sticking out the tongue or 'rooting around'. When you first notice these, offer your baby the breast. Latching-on is more difficult with a crying or upset baby.

## Positioning and Latch

- When starting to breastfeed your baby, find a comfortable position. Support your baby's back and arms with pillows as needed.
- Hold your baby with his chest turned towards your chest. Your baby's ear, shoulder and hip should be in a straight line. This will help both of you be comfortable and to "get a good latch". See pictures of positioning on the back of this page.
- Support your breast with your hand in the shape of the letter "C", not letting the hand touch the darker area around the nipple. Slightly tip the end of the nipple upward.



- Touch your baby's lips with your nipple. Wait until the mouth is open, as if yawning. Bring the lower lip in first, head slightly flexed backward. Let the wide open mouth latch on to the darker skin around your nipple.
- Check to see that your baby's lower lip turns out (this may look like 'fish lips'). Latching-on to only the nipple can cause sore nipples.
- Your baby's chin should firmly touch the breast while breastfeeding. Head should be slightly flexed back.
- When your baby is latched onto the breast correctly, breastfeeding should not be painful. If you have pain, gently slide a clean finger into the corner of your baby's mouth to break the latch, reposition your baby and start again.
- After your baby is finished on one side, burp and offer the other breast.

## Just remember . . .

The first few weeks with your new baby are a learning process. Working with your baby now will help your body produce the amount of milk needed for your baby's growth and development. Spending a lot of time with your baby during the first weeks will allow breastfeeding to occur often -- at least 8 to 12 times in a 24 hour period. If your baby seems hungry soon after a feeding, it's ok to breastfeed again. Breastfeeding your baby is not done on a schedule, but when the baby is hungry.

## Breastfeeding Positions



**Cradle**

- Place your baby across your stomach, tummy to tummy. The baby's face and knees should be close and facing, your body.
- The baby's head should be in the bend of your elbow, with the mouth directly in front of the nipple.
- The baby's body should be in a straight line from ear to shoulder to hip. You can tuck the baby's lower arm around your waist so it is not in the way.

- The baby's position is the same as the cradle hold, but you will hold the baby in the arm opposite the breast for latching onto.
- Keep the baby level to the breast with the body turned toward you.
- You may be able to tuck the baby's bottom into the crook of your arm.



**Cross Cradle**



**Football or Clutch**

- Lay baby beside you.
- Support baby and your arm with pillows.
- The base of the baby's head will be in the palm of your hand and the baby's back will lie on your inner forearm.
- Tuck the baby's feet slightly behind you.
- This position works well for:
  - ◆ mother who has had a C-section,
  - ◆ small babies,
  - ◆ mother who has difficulty on one side,
  - ◆ mother with large breasts,
  - ◆ mother with flat nipples,
  - ◆ baby with latch problems.

- Lie on one side and support your head and back with pillows so you are comfortable.
- Bend one arm under your head and use the other hand to support your breast.
- Line the baby up tummy to tummy with you.
- Your nipple should be opposite the baby's mouth.
- Nurse on the lower breast.
- Reposition to feed the baby on the other side.



**Lying Down**

Graphics provided by Parentingweb.



Breastfeeding Welcome Here



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