Baby is Getting Enough Breast Milk When …
(Basic Guidelines and a Starter Feeding Diary)

Newborn babies should breastfeed when showing signs of being hungry. After the first 24 hours of life, your baby should have at least 8 feedings every 24 hours during the first two weeks. After two weeks of age, if your baby is gaining weight well, breastfeed your baby whenever he is hungry.

Keeping your baby with you 24 hours a day will help you learn your baby’s hunger/feeding cues and get breastfeeding off to a good start. It is best to feed the baby when he shows early signs of being hungry.

Common infant signs of hunger (feeding cues):

Early signs
• Smacking or licking lips
• Opening and closing mouth
• Sucking on lips, tongue, hands, fingers, your cheek or clothing

Active signs
• Rooting around on the chest of whoever is carrying the baby
• Trying to position for nursing, either by lying back or pulling at your clothes
• Fidgeting or squirming around a lot
• Hitting you on the arm or chest repeatedly

Late signs
• Moving head frantically from side to side
• Crying

If your baby is very sleepy and not giving you signs of hunger or is not breastfeeding often, contact your breastfeeding resource person or the baby’s health care provider.

Give your baby as much skin-to-skin contact as possible. Snuggling gives you and your baby the best start for breastfeeding. Research studies have shown that skin-to-skin babies breastfeed better. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all babies spend time skin-to-skin right after birth. Keeping your baby skin-to-skin in his first few weeks makes it easy to know when to breastfeed, especially of your baby is a little sleepy.

Continued
How will you know if your baby is getting enough milk?

Your baby's wet and soiled diapers are the best way to know how much milk is being given during feeding. Here is an example of the least amount you might expect every 24 hours:

- Day 1: 1 wet, 1 bowel movement
- Day 2: 2 wets, 2 bowel movements
- Day 3: 3 wets, 3 bowel movements
- Day 4: 4 wets, 4 bowel movements
- Day 5 to 6: 6 to 8 wets, 4 bowel movements
- After 6 weeks: 5 to 6 wets, 5 to 6 bowel movements

If very small in amount: 1 every few days, if large in amount

If you are using disposable diapers, it may be difficult to know if the diaper is wet in the first few days because your baby produces small amounts of urine. You can place a tissue or a cotton ball in the diaper to help you see if there is urine. Some disposable diapers have a strip to indicate wetness. By the second week, wet diapers will feel heavier (indicating an increase in urine) and will be easier to count. At all ages, the urine should be pale in color and have a mild smell.

By about day 5, infant bowel movements lighten to yellow in color. This color change is the best sign that your baby is getting enough colostrum at first, and later, enough mature breast milk. Bowel movements will be very loose and seedy. Your baby may have a bowel movement at every feeding.

If your baby's wetting and bowel movement pattern is different most of the time from the one described above, call your breastfeeding resource person who will help you figure out if your baby is getting enough from the breast.

How can you tell if your milk is being transferred to the baby during a feeding?

- You may get thirsty
- You may feel relaxed or sleepy
- Milk may leak from opposite breast
- Your breast may tingle or ache
- You may feel discomfort in your abdomen as your uterus cramps during feedings in the first week
- You may have increased vaginal bleeding

How will you know your baby is getting enough milk during a feeding? Expect:

- Your breast will feel full before a feeding and softer after a feeding
- Change in the way baby sucks, from short, rapid sucks to slower rhythmic sucks
- You can hear your baby swallowing
- Your baby becomes relaxed after feeding

Any time you are concerned about the amount of milk your baby is receiving, call your breastfeeding resource person or your baby's health care provider. They will be able to help you determine that you are providing all the milk your baby needs. If necessary, they will also give you advise on what you can do to increase your breast milk supply.
# Feeding Diary

A written record of feedings and diaper changes will help you to figure out if baby is getting enough to eat.

**To use this chart:**

Circle the time you start to feed the baby. Write down comments if needed (for example, if baby was sleepy, fussy, feeding on and off, etc.) Put a checkmark under “Wet” or “BM” (bowel movement) after you change the diaper.

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*Make copies of this page as needed.*

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.