

Breastfeeding Your Baby in the First 3 Days of Life

The First Day

Birth to 2 hours: Ready to Learn

- Baby is **awake and eager** to breastfeed.
- Short bursts of sucking are normal.
- Your breasts are soft.

What to Do

- Hold baby skin to skin, even if you had a C-section.
- Ask a nurse for help to put baby to your breast.



2 to 24 Hours: Sleepy Baby

- Baby **sleeps a lot** and may **not** want to eat.
- Baby may **not** latch well yet.
- Baby may have small feedings with short bursts of sucking.
- Baby's stomach holds 1 to 2 teaspoons each feeding.
- Baby may have one or more wet diapers and dark poops.
- It's normal for baby to lose some weight.
- Your breasts are soft and have a little thick, yellowish milk (colostrum).

What to Do:

- Hold baby skin to skin.
- Try breastfeeding when baby shows cues: sucks on hands, opens mouth and turns head, or sticks out tongue
- Ask for help so that you and baby are comfortable.



The Second Day

24 to 48 Hours: Feeding Frenzy

- Baby wakes up to breastfeed a lot.
- Baby acts fussy and wants to feed all the time.
- You and baby are still learning how to nurse.
- Baby's stomach holds 2 teaspoons milk at each feeding.
- Baby may have 2 to 3 wet diapers and 2 or more dark poops.
- It's normal for baby to lose some weight.
- Your breasts are still soft, with small amounts of colostrum.

What to Do

- Hold baby skin to skin.
- Breastfeed when baby shows feeding cues.
- Take a nap when baby sleeps. You will both be up a lot at night.
- Ask for help so that you and baby are comfortable.



The Third Day

48-72 Hours: Night Owls

- Baby wakes to feed 8 or more times a day and many times at night.
- Baby drinks with bursts of sucking and resting.
- Baby's stomach stretches to hold 5 teaspoons of milk per feeding.
- Baby wets 3 or more diapers in 24 hours.
- You may see orange crystals in baby's diaper.
- Poops change from black to greenish brown.
- Baby's skin may be a little yellow. This is called jaundice.



What to Do

- Hold your baby skin to skin.
- Breastfeed when baby shows feeding cues.
- Take a nap when baby sleeps. You will both be up a lot at night.
- Ask for help so that you and baby are comfortable.

More Than 3 Days Old

Learning and Growing

- Baby wakes to feed 8 to 12 times a day and many times at night.
- Baby has bursts of sucking and resting. You can hear baby swallow milk.
- Baby's stomach grows to hold 2 ounces or more of milk per feeding.
- Baby may lose more weight, but starts gaining by day 4.
- Baby has more wet and dirty diapers. Baby's poops become yellow and seedy.
- Baby's skin may be yellow, or jaundiced.
- Your breasts get full or firm by day 4.



What to Do

- Keep feeding often to help baby grow and thrive.
- The more you breastfeed, the more milk you will make.
- Keep asking for help and support as you need it.

