



# A New Mother's Guide to Breastfeeding Success



HOWARD COUNTY  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE



*Congratulations* on your new baby! This is one of the happiest moments in a new family's life, and the staff at Howard County General Hospital (HCGH) is committed to making your first days with your new baby a wonderful experience. This includes helping all new mothers achieve breastfeeding success.

Breastfeeding is a learned skill, and the staff of the Maternal-Child Unit and our lactation consultants are here to support you in any way necessary. Every baby is different and so is every breastfeeding experience.

We encourage you to record your baby's feedings in the breastfeeding log at the end of this booklet to help ensure that your baby is receiving just what he or she needs to thrive. It also helps to keep track of feedings while in the hospital and after you go home, at a time when you may feel sleep deprived and have trouble remembering. Your pediatrician also may want to review this information at your baby's first office visit.

The following information will help you get breastfeeding off to a good start as you and your baby begin the journey of new life together.

## Benefits of Breastfeeding for Baby

- Human milk is custom-designed for human babies. It provides all of the nutrition, antibodies and disease protection your baby needs for the healthiest start in life. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months, followed by continued breastfeeding for one year or longer as complementary foods are introduced. There is no need for any other food for the first six months of life, unless there are medical reasons.
- Breastfeeding provides lifelong benefits and protection against many diseases, including diabetes, obesity and asthma.
- Breast milk is easier to digest than formula.

### Recent research suggests:

- Babies who are breastfed have lower rates of pneumonia, ear infections and SIDS.
- Babies who are breastfed have less constipation.
- Babies who are breastfed have higher intelligence scores.



## Benefits of Breastfeeding for Mothers

### Recent research shows:

- Women who breastfeed have a lower risk of developing breast cancer, Type 2 diabetes, ovarian cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis and postpartum depression.
- Breastfeeding helps new moms return to pre-pregnancy weight faster.
- Saves money. Formula can cost more than \$1,700 per year. Breast milk is free!
- Breast milk requires no preparation. There are no bottles or nipples to clean and sterilize or formula to mix, and it is available whenever you need it.
- Breastfeeding can make you feel great. Being close to your baby promotes a bonding experience like no other. In fact, breastfeeding releases a hormone called oxytocin that helps milk flow and calms you!



## Cherishing Your First Moments Together

Skin-to-skin contact is the best way to welcome your newborn. It helps your baby feel safe and calm and begins the mother-child bonding experience. Our staff will encourage you to keep your baby skin-to-skin as much as possible these first few days. Dads can do skin-to-skin too!

Most new parents want to know the weight of their baby right away to report to friends and family. But the weight can wait! Skin-to-skin contact in the first hour after birth is an important step to establishing a bond and facilitating breastfeeding.

## Learning to Breastfeed

- Skin-to-skin contact immediately after your baby is born is the best way to begin the experience of breastfeeding your baby.
- Breastfeed your baby as soon as possible after you give birth, when your baby is wide awake.
- Ask for help. Our nurses and lactation consultants are here to support you as you begin to feed your baby.
- Breastfeed often. Feeding your baby 8 to 12 times a day will ensure that you are making plenty of milk.
- Learn and follow your baby's feeding cues. Rooming-in will help you recognize the first signs that your baby is ready to feed.

## Rooming-In Supports Bonding and Breastfeeding

At HCGH, babies and moms remain together throughout the hospital stay. We want to help you learn about your baby, bond and achieve successful breastfeeding. Our staff will care for you and your baby in the comfort of your private room. You and your baby will only be separated for medical procedures that cannot be performed in your room or when medical observation is necessary.

### Rooming-in provides additional benefits:

- New moms begin to recognize baby's feeding cues.
- Babies sleep better and experience less stress and crying when near their mother.
- Dads or partners have the chance to bond with baby and provide additional support for moms.
- Mothers can breastfeed more, which helps with milk supply, newborn health and comfort.
- Parents become more confident about caring for their newborn from the start.
- New parents interact with doctors and nurses and become a part of the baby's medical care and check-ups, which are performed with the parents in the room.



## Recognize Your Baby's Feeding Cues

Rooming-in helps new parents learn to recognize and understand baby's feeding cues, which will make breastfeeding a bit easier. Offer the breast as soon as your baby shows these signs:

- Rapid eye movements (fluttery eye movements while eyes are closed)
- Increased alertness or activity
- Rooting, opening mouth as though to feed or when a touch on the cheek results in your baby turning toward the touch
- Hands to mouth, or sucking on own hand
- Crying is a late feeding cue.



## Learning to Latch

A good latch is very important for effective breastfeeding. For many new mothers and babies, developing a good latch can take time, practice and patience. Our lactation specialists offer these tips:

- A good latch feels comfortable for you and will not cause pain. The first moment might be slightly uncomfortable as baby draws nipple to the proper place in their mouth.
- To begin, hold your baby close with baby's tummy facing your tummy.
- Have one hand supporting your baby's neck and shoulders and use your other hand to support the breast behind the areola.
- Start with your baby's nose close to the nipple.
- Stroke downward with your nipple across your baby's lips to encourage him to open his mouth.
- Wait until your baby's mouth is open wide and gently bring baby toward your breast with the head back slightly to make it easy to suck and swallow.
- Baby should take a big mouthful of breast, not just the nipple, to ensure your baby gets more milk and so that you don't feel any discomfort.
- If you feel discomfort for more than a minute, insert your finger to break the suction, remove your baby and re-latch.
- Consult with our lactation consultants or nurses if you have any concerns or problems with developing a good latch. Consult with your nurse if you continue to have discomfort throughout the entire feeding.

**Remember:** You know the saying, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again?” It holds true for breastfeeding, too. If you are having difficulty with breastfeeding in the beginning, know that you are not alone. The staff of HCGH’s Maternal-Child Unit and lactation consultants are here to help you succeed and feel good about providing your baby with everything he or she needs.



## Your First Feedings

Each feeding is a new learning experience for you both. Feedings are easier to accomplish when you use your baby’s cues as an invitation to practice. Here are some helpful hints:

- Infants are often sleepy during the first few hours after birth. Skin-to-skin contact will encourage your baby to breastfeed.
- If baby has been asleep too long, try changing a diaper or performing gentle arm or leg movements. Hand express drops of colostrum for your baby to taste. It is important to wake your baby to breastfeed if he or she has been asleep too long or if your breasts feel full.
- Feed your baby whenever he wants for as long as he wants.
- Your first milk is called colostrum. This is concentrated milk that is only a small amount during the first few days (teaspoons), as your baby’s stomach is the size of a marble.
- Colostrum provides your baby with antibodies and protection against disease that formula cannot. It also helps your baby’s digestive tract work properly.
- Your milk supply is determined by how often your baby nurses and empties the breast. Feed often for a plentiful milk supply.
- Listen for swallows, which can sound like a soft “kah” noise.
- If your breasts are too full for baby to latch, hand express a little milk to soften the areola. A nurse or lactation consultant at HCGH can teach you techniques to express milk. This website from Stanford University offers a video on hand expression: [newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding](http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding).
- It is normal for your baby to experience some weight loss in the first few days after birth. Many newborns can lose up to 10 percent of their birth weight. Your baby should be back to birth weight by two weeks. Check with your pediatrician if you have any concerns.
- Record your baby’s feedings in the breastfeeding log at the end of this book to keep track of duration and frequency of feedings.
- Aim for 8 to 12 feedings each day. Frequent, early feedings now prepare your breasts for more milk later.

## Additional Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

- Do not supplement breast milk with formula or other supplements, unless medically necessary. Unnecessary supplementing can impact milk supply.
- If supplements are medically necessary, talk to your nurse or lactation consultant about using alternative methods such as a spoon, syringe or cup to feed your baby.
- Avoid using bottles and pacifiers which can cause “nipple confusion” and make breastfeeding more challenging.

**Remember:** The more you breastfeed your baby, the more milk your body will produce. Your body is wondrous; it can regulate the amount of milk your baby needs by how frequently your baby feeds and how much your baby takes in.



## Nighttime is the Right Time

Mothers who exclusively breastfeed their babies day and night get an average of 40 to 45 minutes MORE sleep. That’s an extra five hours of sleep each week! Not only do they (and their partners) get more sleep, studies show that the quality of their sleep is improved—they actually feel more rested the next day. This lovely combination LOWERS their risk of depression.

Wonderful things happen when your baby breastfeeds at night:

- Baby gets more breast milk at each feeding because your milk supply peaks during the night and early morning hours.
- At night, breast milk contains a special hormone, melatonin, which helps your baby get their days and nights straightened out.
- Nighttime breast milk is extra rich in a specific amino acid that helps baby go to sleep easily and promotes brain development. The hormone (serotonin) made from this amino acid can even reduce the risk of long-term mood disorders!
- Because your body knows how much milk to make based on how frequently your breasts are emptied, breastfeeding at night helps ensure that you will make plenty of milk for your baby.

So the next time your baby wants to eat at 3 a.m., remember he is really giving you a gift!

## Is My Baby Getting Enough Milk?

Many new mothers worry that their babies aren't getting enough breast milk. Understanding the size of a newborn's stomach can provide you with perspective on how much milk your baby should take in the first few days of life.

### Your Baby's Stomach



## Your Baby's Diaper and What to Look For

**What your baby's diapers look like is a good indication of successful feedings.**

- Day 1:** 1 wet, 1 stool (color black)
- Day 2:** 2 wet, 2 stools (color black/brown)
- Day 3:** 3 wet, 3 stools (color brown/green)
- Day 4:** 4 wet, 3 stools (color green/yellow)
- Day 5:** 5 wet, 3-4 stools (yellow, seedy for breast milk babies); if stool remains black or brown after day four, call your pediatrician
- Day 6:** 6-8 wet, 3-4 stools  
**and beyond**

**By the end of the first week, your baby should have six to eight wet diapers and three to four stools daily.** It is okay to have more than this. Wet diapers typically equal 1 to 2 tablespoons of liquid; stools (poops) should be about the size of a baby's fist. If your baby is not having enough wet and dirty diapers, please call your pediatrician with any concerns or questions.









## Lactation Consultants

- To find a lactation consultant near you, visit [ILCA.org](http://ILCA.org) (International Lactation Consultant Association)
- Howard County WIC, 410-313-7510, 800-242-4942

## Volunteer Assistance

- La Leche League (*breastfeeding information, local meetings*), [llofmd-de-dc.org](http://llofmd-de-dc.org), 800-525-3243
- Howard County General Hospital breastfeeding support group (*see back cover*)

## Nursing Bras and Hands-free Bras

*Many retail stores sell nursing bras, including: Babies“R”Us, JCPenney, Target, Walmart, Motherhood Maternity*

- Bare Necessities, Inc., Lutherville, 410-583-1383
- Nordstrom, Columbia (*will it and order; some in stock*), 410-715-2222
- Metropolitan Breastfeeding, 301-943-9293



## Breast Pump Rentals/Sales

*Check first with your insurance company to determine whether you are eligible for a free pump*

- Best Price Pumps, 410-689-9320, Linda Lonsbury, lalonsbury@gmail.com
- Special Beginnings, 410-626-8982
- Ameda, 877-99-AMEDA, ameda.com
- Medela, 800-TELL-YOU, medela.com
- Northern Pharmacy, 410-254-2055, ext. 217
- Caring Touch, 410-601-4725
- Metropolitan Breastfeeding, 301-943-9293
- Frederick Breast Pump Rentals, 301-471-8569

## Apps for New Moms

- **Apple Apps:** I Breastfeed (Medela), Baby Nursing/Breastfeeding, Baby Tracker, Baby Feeding Log, Eat Sleep, Milk Maid, My Milk (Ameda)
- **Android Apps:** Feed Baby/Feed Baby Pro, Breastfeeding Tabulator, Breastfeeding Management, My Milk (Ameda), Flourish-Women's Resource

## Medication Resources for Breastfeeding Moms

- LactMed (NIH) is an online resource (toxnet.nlm.nih.gov) that lists common drugs and supplements and their impact on breastfeeding mothers and their babies, based on the latest scientific literature. There is also a LactMed app.
- Infant Risk Center (medications and breastfeeding), 806-352-2519, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Central Time)

## Websites

Healthychildren.org

Marylandbreastfeedingcoalition.org

Newborns.stanford.edu

Newdadmanual.ca

Womenshealth.gov

Lowmilksupply.org

Lactationtraining.com (parent handouts)

# BREASTFEEDING Support Group

**Mondays or Wednesdays**  
**12:30-1:30 p.m.**

Meets in the HCGH Wellness Center, 10710 Charter Drive  
*No appointment needed*

Classes and Events: [hcgh.org/events](http://hcgh.org/events)



## **BREASTFEEDING CLASSES**

To register, visit [hcgh.org/baby](http://hcgh.org/baby) or call  
the Wellness Center, **410-740-7601**

Maternal Child Unit: **410-740-7830**