

THE SCOOP ON LATCHING

WITH NAIDA HAWKINS RN IBCLC

BEFORE YOU START

- MAKE SURE YOU GO TO THE BATHROOM IF YOU NEED TO AND ARE COMFORTABLE. TRY TO HAVE A DRINK AND SNACK YOURSELF EVERY TIME YOUR BABY EATS.
- GET COMFORTABLE AND TAKE OUT THE BREAST YOU WISH TO START WITH.
- DO 30-60 SECONDS OF MASSAGE AND HAND EXPRESSION TO GET THE MILK MOVING. THIS MAKES IT EASIER FOR BABY TO LEARN.



GETTING YOURSELF READY

- SIT UP AS STRAIGHT AS YOU CAN AND HAVE PILLOWS FOR COMFORT.
- THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE MOMS MAKE IS BRINGING THE BREAST TO THE BABY. WE NEED TO BRING THE BABY TO BREAST. I OFTEN ASK MOMS TO IMAGINE THEY CANNOT MOVE THEIR BREAST AND THAT BABY MUST BE BROUGHT TO THEIR BREASTS.
- IF YOU HAVE PAIN, ASK YOURSELF "AM I BRINGING BABY TO THE BREAST OR BREAST TO THE BABY?"

GETTING BABY READY

- MAKE SURE BABY IS ONLY IN A DIAPER UNTIL 2 WEEKS OLD OR BACK TO THEIR BIRTH WEIGHT.
- FEEDING BABIES WITH TOO MANY CLOTHES ON CAN MAKE THEM TOO HOT AND SLEEPY TO FEED WELL.



Cross Cradle



- Baby is completely on their side with their tummy tucked close to you.
- Make sure there is no space between baby's tummy and yourself. Baby's face is looking your breast.
- Baby's bum is in your elbow. Cradle baby's neck with your palm.
- **Do not** push on baby's head as this makes them close their mouth and makes latching more difficult.



- Use a "C" shaped hand to prepare the nipple for baby to latch. When doing cross cradle, the nipple is between thumb and fingers side to side (see picture).



- When baby goes to latch, start with your nipple at their nose, so they are looking slightly up at the breast.
- Tickle baby's nose and upper lip with your nipple and when they open wide, give a huge hug. Imagine hugging with your wrist/elbow/shoulder at the same time and quite quickly.



- Compress your breast (squeeze it) while baby is feeding until they are back to their birth weight.
- Let baby suck for 5 seconds and if there is still pain, unlatch by pushing on your nipple with your finger to break suction. Try latching again, this time hugging quicker/faster, when baby has their mouth open wide, to help them get further on to the breast.

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Football



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How to Unlatch

- Unlatch by pushing on your nipple with your finger to break suction.

Learning to Feed

- While breastfeeding is natural, it is learned skill. Just like when you will teach your child to ride a bike one day, time and opportunities to practice are what will help.
- It is natural for babies to latch and unlatch many times in the first days of life. This is just them practicing and learning. Once they master feeding, this will not happen.

How Long Should a Feeding Last?

- Offer both breasts at each feeding.
- Remember, it is normal for babies to latch and unlatch many times before they latch well and stay latched.
- Once baby is latched make sure they are actively feeding. Keep compressing your breast (ask your partner to help).
- Once baby slows down and is not feeding, take them off, wake them up, and once they are awake, put them back on the same breast. Resume hand compressions.
- Once they are no longer actively feeding, unlatch baby, wake them up, and switch breasts. Try to give baby "two good feeding opportunities" at each breast per feeding.
- Try to continue with "two feeding opportunities" on the other breast. Sometimes baby only has room for one good chance and then will be too sleepy.
- Next time you breastfeed, start on the breast you last used.
- If feeding is taking more than 30-45 minutes be sure that baby is not sleeping at the breast.
- Once baby is back to their birth weight you can go down to one good chance at each breast.

How Often Should I Breastfeed?

Babies need to eat at least 8 times in 24 hours, but may eat more. Remember, they are attempting to double their birth weight! They will also have times of eating more such as during teething and when they are going through growth spurts. You are doing a great job!



Naida Hawkins is a Registered Nurse and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. Her passion is assisting families as they bring life into this world. These are her words and are not to be taken as substitute for medical advice.



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