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What I Want Parents to Know

Registered Nurse/International Board Certified Lactation Consultant

WHAT I WOULD WANT PARENTS TO KNOW

- Breast stimulation in the first hour matters a LOT. If baby comes out and latches right on great, but if in a half hour if baby is still not latching hand express and feed by spoon.
- Always wash your hands before breastfeeding.
- Wake baby to feed every 2 to 3 hours until they are back to their birthweight.
- Until your milk is in, end every feed with 5-10 minutes of hand expression and feed the extra colostrum to baby.
- Always feed baby in just a diaper until they are back to their birthweight (around 2 weeks).
- Always offer both breasts at each feeding.
- Use breast compressions (squeeze your breast) while feeding to help empty the breast until baby is back to birthweight. See "Scoop on Latching"
- Breastfeeding is a learned skill for you and baby. You wouldn't expect your 3 year old to ride a bike perfectly on the first try. It is the same with feeding your baby. You both will learn!
- If you experience difficulty or separation the most important thing is to move the milk. If pumping squeeze your breast while you pump.
- How soon milk comes in and how much comes in is related to breast stimulation from a suckling baby and hand expression in the first 24 hours.
- You are enough and your baby loves you!
- It is normal to feel like this is a big job at first. But by 2 weeks most ALL breastfeeding challenges are resolved.
- If feeding is taking more than 30-40 minutes baby may be sleeping a lot while feeding. Make sure baby is actually eating while at the breast.



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WHAT BABY WANTS ME TO TELL YOU

- I am tired from labour too!
- This is a big new world. I am happiest on your chest with my ear on your heart-I remember the sound of your heartbeat is one of the first sounds I heard.
- I like getting skin to skin snuggles from other family members too.
- Learning to eat can sometimes be challenging. I like when you hum while we practice breastfeeding it helps me stay calm.
- The sound " sh sh sh" is very calming to me as it sounds like blood rushing in and out of the umbilical cord-I listened to it a lot in your tummy.
- I appreciate when you give me snacks so that I have energy to learn more about feeding (hand expressed colostrum).
- I am so happy that you are my parent.
- Feeding will get easier for both of us.

HOW TO KNOW MY BABY IS GETTING ENOUGH

Baby's pee and poop is a great clue about how much baby is getting. So celebrate changing baby's poopy diapers! You will also learn what your baby's swallows sound like.

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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.