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Building your milk supply:

- Feed early and often, at the earliest signs of hunger.
- 8-12 feedings per 24 hours is expected, although these feedings may not follow a regular schedule.
- Avoid pacifiers or bottles, at least in the first 4-8 weeks.
- Frequent feeds, not formula: Only use formula if there's a medical reason.
- Sleep near your baby, even at home. Learn to nurse lying down.

Feed at the earliest signs of hunger:

- Hands to mouth, sucking movements.
- Soft cooing, sighing sounds, or stretching.
- Crying is a late sign of hunger: don't wait until then!

Watch the baby, not the clock.

- Alternate which breast you start with, or start with the breast that feels most full.
- Switch sides when swallowing slows or infant takes himself off.
- It's OK if baby doesn't take the second breast at every feed.
- Help baby open his mouth widely: tickle his upper lip, or use your nipple to stroke his chin.
- If the baby is sleepy: skin-to-skin contact can encourage feeding:
 - ▲ Remove baby's top and place him on your bare chest.

Look for signs of milk transfer:

- You can hear the baby swallowing or gulping.
- There are no clicking or smacking sounds.
- Baby no longer shows signs of hunger after a feed.
- Baby's body and hands are relaxed for a short time.
- You may feel milk let-down:
 - ▲ You may feel relaxed, drowsy, or thirsty, and you may have tingling in your breasts.
 - ▲ You may feel some contractions in your uterus, or your other breast may leak milk.
- You should feel strong tugging, but NOT persistent pain. Proper latch prevents pain:
 - ▲ "chin-to-breast, chest-to-chest"
 - ▲ "flip lips for a sip:" baby's lips flare outward
 - ▲ wide open mouth: baby's mouth covers most of the areola (dark area of breast)—not just the nipple.
- Baby has adequate weight gain: follow up 2 days after discharge and again at 2 weeks.

What goes in, must come out. Look for:

- 3 bowel movements every 24 hours by day 4
- Bowel movements change from dark black to green/brown to loose yellow as your milk comes in.
- 6 wet/heavy diapers a day after day 4

Over time:

- All babies have days when they nurse more frequently. This doesn't mean you aren't making enough milk.
- Responding to feeding cues helps babies to regulate milk supply.
- Breast swelling normally lessens at about 7-10 days and it is NOT a sign of decreased milk supply.
- Your milk may look thin or bluish, but it contains plenty of nutrients.

If you choose to share a bed with your baby:

- Keep the bed away from walls on both sides to avoid entrapment.
- Avoid heavy blankets, duvets, or pillows.
- Avoid soft surfaces such as waterbeds, couches, and daybeds.
- Neither parent should be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or medications that would affect the ability to wake up.
- As with sleeping separately, put the baby to sleep on his back.
- Do not allow the baby to sleep alone on an adult bed.
- Do not allow anyone except the baby's parents to share a bed with the baby.
- Because the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is higher in children of smokers, parents who smoke should not bedshare, but may sleep with the baby nearby.

If you have questions, persistent pain, or can't hear swallowing, ask for help right away!



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For informational purposes only. This handout does not replace medical advice.