

E Nurture

A newsletter for breastfeeding mothers
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Newborn Behaviors and Breastfeeding

The #1 concern of new breastfeeding mothers is “Do I have enough milk? Is the baby getting enough?”

Signs of adequate milk intake:

- ☉ Breastfeeding at least eight to 10 times in 24 hours
- ☉ At least six to eight wet diapers and three to five bowel movements each day by the time the baby is five days old
- ☉ Regains birth weight by two to three weeks of age
- ☉ Weight gain of at least four to eight ounces a week
Consistent upward curve on the growth chart
- ☉ Active and alert baby

Normal Newborn Behavior

Cluster feedings - Babies usually nurse in an irregular pattern. They will breastfeed frequently (maybe even every hour) then sleep for a longer interval (maybe even five to six hours). Just make sure that in the newborn period, your baby is breastfeeding eight to 12 times in 24 hours.

Day/night confusion - Many babies choose to sleep in long stretches during the day, and want to take shorter naps and “play” during the night. This is a common newborn pattern. By attempting to wake the baby to breastfeed every two to three hours during the day, you will help him to adjust. During the day have lights on, talk to the baby, have the TV or radio going – and make it an exciting time. At night keep the light dim, talk quietly, and do not stimulate the baby’s interest, make it a boring time. After a couple of weeks, the baby should adjust to more wakeful times during the day, waking at night to feed and then go right back to sleep.

Sleepy babies - Some babies snuggle up with mom when put to the breast and sleep instead of eating. To

wake a sleepy baby, unwrap the blanket, massage the back and legs, or change the diaper. Don’t bundle the baby in too many blankets, because the baby will just want to sleep if he is too warm. To help rouse and activate a baby who falls asleep at the breast, change sides when suckling stops. You may need to change sides three or four times during each feeding, changing every five minutes or so, until the baby is a little older and more awake.

To increase your milk supply

Breastmilk is made on a supply/demand basis. To increase your milk, just breastfeed more often. Adding one or two extra nursings a day will gradually increase your milk supply. The number of “starts” of breastfeedings does more to increase your milk supply than the “length” of nursings. Feeding your baby for 10 minutes every hour will make more milk than feeding your baby for 30 minutes every three hours. You will spend the same amount of time feeding your baby, but will encourage greater milk production with more frequent feedings.

To “jump start” your milk supply (increase in minimum amount of time):

Make the decision to devote the next 48 hours to an intense effort to make more milk. Let the laundry go, let the dust wait, fix simple meals, or order take-out.

Breastfeed the baby every hour, even if it is only for a minute or two at each breast; 7 a.m., 8 a.m., 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11 a.m., etc. Continue feeding every hour for as long as you are able. After about five hours, most moms need a break!... so then nurse every two hours for a stretch.

**Family Birth Place at
Park Ridge Hospital**

 **Unity Health System**
www.unityhealth.org



It will seem like a long time by comparison. When you are able, begin breastfeeding every hour again.

At night, feed the baby on demand. You will both need the rest. If the baby sleeps, wake him one time after five or six hours to breastfeed during the night. The next morning, begin again to feed the baby every hour. Follow the feeding pattern from the day before.

After 24 hours you should notice a change in your breasts. Some moms will have more milk by then, some will feel totally empty and their breasts will be achy. Either way, something is happening! You may feel discouraged and “teary.” These are signs that your hormones are gearing up to increase milk production. Push through these feelings and stick with the plan for another day. Within 48 hours from the time you started, you should be producing more milk. You should hear more swallowing when the baby is at the breast, you may feel fuller, and the number of wet diapers and bowel movements the baby produces should

increase. When these signs of increased milk are evident, you can begin to feed the baby on demand, but at least eight to 10 times in 24 hours (and remember the “cluster-feeding” pattern).

During your free time, pamper yourself – take a bubble bath, walk outside, watch your favorite television programs, rent a video, or take a nap. Eat simple, nutritious foods such as peanut butter sandwiches, turkey sandwiches, pizza, hard boiled eggs, veggie sticks, and fruit. Make sure to drink water and fruit juice to satisfy your thirst. In fact, it is a good idea to have a tall glass of water next to you to sip while you are nursing.

Increasing your milk in this way can be a very demanding two days, and most moms never have to go to this extreme to manage their milk supply. However, this is a fast, effective way to help your body to make more milk when the situation calls for quick action.

If you have any questions about milk supply, adequate weight gain for the baby, or any other breastfeeding concerns, you can call the lactation consultants at
The Family Birth Place at Park Ridge Hospital.

Breastfeeding Helpline
(585) 368-4033