



Information for breastfeeding families

Is My Baby Getting Enough?

Often a new parent's biggest concern is about how much and how often the baby breastfeeds.

Here are some guidelines to help you know if your baby is getting enough:

- You should be responsive to your baby's feeding cues. After the first 24 hours, most babies will feed 8 or more times in 24 hours. As your baby gets older, feedings will become more efficient and may be less frequent.
- Some feedings may be close together, even an hour or so apart. Other feedings will be less frequent. Feedings do not need to be evenly spaced and are often irregular in the newborn baby. Wake your baby if he doesn't awaken to feed within 3 hours during the day. Night time feedings can be less frequent.

Typical patterns for wet diapers are:

- 1 wet diaper on day one**
 - 2 wet diapers on day two**
 - 3 wet diapers on day three**
 - 4 wet diapers on day four**
 - 5 wet diapers on day five**
 - 6 wet diapers on day six and from then on**
- Look for light yellow to clear urine**

Typical patterns for stools are several per day:

- Day 1 Meconium (dark & tarry)**
 - Day 2 Brownish**
 - Day 3 Brownish yellow**
 - Day 4 Dark yellow, soft**
 - Day 5 Yellow, semi-liquid**
- Some newborns stool after every feeding**
- Stools taper off and may not even occur every day as your baby gets older**

Babies generally lose a little weight in the first few days after birth and then begin to gain. This is a normal pattern. If your baby meets the diaper chart above, the baby is probably transferring enough milk. Babies typically lose between 4-7% of birth weight. Work with a lactation consultant if the weight loss is closer to 10%. Have your baby's weight checked a couple of times during the first 2 weeks, especially if you are concerned that your baby is not eating enough. A weight check is the only sure way to determine adequate intake. Once your baby has regained birth weight, at about 2 weeks, you can relax and let your baby set the pace for the feedings.

Sometimes babies seem to take a good feeding at the breast but wake within a few minutes wanting more. Offer the breast again. It will likely be a short "top off" feeding and your baby will drop off to sleep.

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Signs of hunger

- Rooting
- Mouthing movements
- Tense appearance
- Grunting, other sounds
- Hand-to-mouth activity
- Kicking, waving arms
- Crying

Signs of a good latch

- Relatively comfortable, latch pain subsides quickly
- Lips at the breast at least 140° angle or greater
- A large portion of the areola in the baby's mouth
- Lips flanged (rolled out)

Signs the baby is full

- Drowsiness, sleepiness
- Baby comes off the breast spontaneously
- Relaxed appearance
- Hands and shoulders are relaxed
- Sleeps for a period of time before arousing to feed again

Signs of a good feeding

- Easy latch, stays latched
- Swallowing you can hear
- Noticing that the breasts are softer after feedings
- Feeling strong, deep, "pulling" sucking
- Seeing milk in your baby's mouth
- Leaking from the other breast or feeling of a "let-down" reflex
- Vigorous sucking
- Wide jaw movements and consistent sucking

Please seek the advice of a Lactation Consultant or another healthcare provider if:

1. Your baby has not begun to gain weight by his fifth day after birth or has not regained birth weight by 2 weeks.
2. During the first week of life, the baby goes 24 hours without pooping.
3. After the first week of life, the baby is not having several stools per day.
4. The baby is not peeing at least six times per day. The diapers should feel heavier.

These signs can indicate inadequate feedings and can become a serious concern if not corrected quickly. You may wish to keep a written record of when your baby voids, stools, and feeds for a few days so you can accurately report this to your health care provider. Please seek help if your problem does not resolve quickly.