



## Should I Breastfeed?

Breastfeeding is a natural way for a woman to feed and nurture her baby while providing health benefits. Breast milk antibodies help protect a baby from illness while also providing a baby with ideal nutrition and supporting optimal growth and development. Protection against infectious disease as well as reduced risk of chronic diseases occurs in both the mother and the baby with breastfeeding.

While at times, breastfeeding can be frustrating and scary, it can also gently nudge us into becoming the kind of mother our baby needs.

### Frequently asked questions if Breastfeeding

- 1) **How do I know if the baby is getting enough to eat?** By day 5 of life babies are wetting 6 or more diapers daily and having at least 3-4 loose yellow stools.
- 2) **Why is it hurting to nurse?** If you have breast or nipple pain, try to make sure the baby is latching properly, change positions and ask for help at the office. It should not hurt to nurse – you should feel just a gentle tug. If the baby is on just the tip of the nipple, try to release the suction with a pinky finger and readjust the latch.
- 3) **When should I pump my breasts?** If the baby is feeding well at the breast and frequently, it is not necessary to pump. But if the baby is having a hard time nursing, then pumping will keep up your milk supply and is recommended.
- 4) **If I do collect breast milk how long is it safe to use?** Freshly expressed milk can sit on the countertop for up to 4 hours. It can be safely stored in the refrigerator for 4 days and in the freezer for 6-12 months.
- 5) **How much do babies eat in the first week?** By day 5, most babies are taking up to 2 ounces or 60ml (about 2.03 oz) at EACH feeding. Typically, babies will nurse every 2-3 hours.
- 6) **What do I do when I am so engorged?** Try to nurse the baby frequently, small amounts. Wear a supportive bra. After feeding, ice packs on the breast can help. Tylenol can be taken for pain. If the baby cannot nurse, hand expressing a small amount of milk can help baby latch. This is temporary and should lessen by Day 7.
- 7) **What is the typical weight gain for a newborn breastfeeding?** We expect babies to start gaining about ½ ounce to 1 ounce daily after the 5<sup>th</sup> day. It is normal for breast-fed babies to lose up to 10% at birth as they quickly regain this. By the 14<sup>th</sup> day most babies are back to birth weight.
- 8) **What can I take if I get sick, with a cold or a fever?** It is safe to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol); Ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil) for a fever/body aches. It is safe to take plain Robitussin for a cough. However, any medication that contains an antihistamine, (Chlorpheniramine; Benadryl; Claritin; Zyrtec) or a decongestant (Pseudoephedrine) may decrease milk supply. Do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions if you are taking meds while breastfeeding.