

Keys to BREASTFEEDING

Skin-to-Skin contact is important

Cuddle skin-to-skin with your baby as soon as possible after birth and between feedings. Spending time skin-to-skin will help your baby:

- Stay warm
- Recover from birth
- Follow the instinct to latch and feed at your breast

Breastmilk for six months

Babies do not need any foods, water or drinks other than breastmilk until six months of age. They can then be given solid foods, along with breastmilk. It is recommended that babies continue to breastfeed and eat solid foods for two years and beyond.

Get off to a great start

- Lean back and place your baby skin-to-skin on your chest
- Allow and assist your baby to crawl toward your breast
- Breastfeed your baby within the first hour after birth
- Get help right away if your baby is not showing interest in latching to your breast
- Offer your breast every few hours or sooner when your baby is showing signs of hunger

When in a good position for breastfeeding:

- You should not experience pain or discomfort
- Your back is well supported
- Baby's nose is lined up with your nipple to latch (nose to nipple)
- Baby's tummy is facing you
- You are able to hold baby close to your body

To get a good latch:

- Wait until baby moves toward your breast
- Touch your nipple to baby's upper lip and wait for baby to latch
- Support your breast while baby latches and feeds
- Make sure that baby feels supported and comfortable

Some babies latch better when the breast is moulded into a "sandwich" shape. To do this, place your hand in a "U" or "C" shape and mould your breast to make it easier for your baby to grasp.

When your baby is latched well:

- Baby's chin and cheeks touch your breast; head is tilted back slightly
- Baby's nose is tilted slightly away from your breast
- Baby's mouth is open wide and lips are flared
- Baby's chin and lower lip touch your breast first
- Baby has more of the breast below the nipple in mouth
- Baby has a strong and regular suck
- You should have no pain and your nipples will not look pinched or white
- You will feel a "tugging" sensation but not pain
- You will hear baby make the "kaa" sound of swallowing. These swallows become more frequent each day. By day three or four you will hear a swallow for every one or two sucks



If your baby is not latching well:

- Be patient and don't give up; it may take days or weeks for the effects of birth to wear off
- Hold the baby skin to skin (this helps the baby recover from birth and encourages feeding)
- Feed your baby another way while your baby continues to work on breastfeeding. Continue to remove milk from your breasts by hand or with a breast pump
- Breastfeed or remove breastmilk about eight times every 24 hours to keep breastmilk production up

Get help. York Region Public Health offers virtual and in-person breastfeeding instruction and support. Call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to speak with a public health nurse about feeding your baby

Your first breast should feel softer before switching to the second

- Keep your baby on the first breast as long as baby is swallowing milk
- When your breast feels softer and there are less swallows, baby can be offered the second breast
- If baby is still showing signs of hunger after both breasts, both breasts can be offered again
- By the end of the feed, at least one breast should feel soft and baby should no longer be showing signs of hunger

Your breasts should not be sore and hard

Your breasts should not become sore or hard if your baby is breastfeeding well. This happens when the breasts are full of milk that is not being removed. Hard, sore breasts can be treated with a cold compress or ice pack to reduce swelling between feedings.

If your baby cannot latch because your breasts are too full and hard, remove some milk by hand or with a pump. This will soften the nipple/areola area to allow baby to latch.

Your baby should be fed at least eight times every 24 hours.

Your baby may show these signs of hunger:

- Wiggling, tossing and turning or restlessness while sleeping
- Moving hands towards mouth and sucking on fists
- Licking lips
- Making sucking motions or sounds
- Rooting (opening mouth, searching to suck and sucking on contact)
- Turning head back and forth
- Sticking out tongue
- Making soft cooing or sighing sounds
- Moving arms and legs

Crying is a late sign of hunger

If your baby is too upset to breastfeed well or latch, you can try:

- Sitting baby upright on your chest, skin-to-skin
- Talking, rocking or gently stroking baby in a calming way

Feeding at night is normal

During the first several weeks of life, your baby will want to feed many times during the night. It may seem that baby has "night and day mixed up". This is normal for newborn babies and will help your baby grow and gain weight and will also help build your milk supply.

Wet and dirty diapers

Diapers are the best way to tell if a baby is getting enough milk.

DAY 1	1 wet diaper; 1-2 black or dark green stool  
DAY 2	2 wet diapers; 1-2 black or dark green stools    
DAY 3	3 wet diapers; at least 3 brown, green or yellow stools      
DAY 4	4 heavy* wet diapers; at least 3 brown, green or yellow stools       
DAY 5	5 heavy wet diapers; at least 3 large, soft yellow stools        
DAY 6	6 heavy wet diapers; at least 3 large, soft yellow stools, may be runny and seedy         
*A heavy wet diaper is equal to about 3 tablespoons of water added to a dry diaper	

Talk to your health care provider, a York Region Public Health nurse or a lactation consultant if your baby is not having enough wet and dirty diapers.



Babies may need supplements (more milk) if:

- They are not having enough wet and dirty diapers for their age
- A health professional is worried that the baby is not growing well
- They cannot latch at the breast or do not drink well at the breast
- A health professional has assessed that breast milk supply is truly low
- They have been separated from their mother for medical or other reasons

Try to give as much breastmilk as possible if supplements are needed. Breastmilk can be removed by hand or using an electric breast pump; this milk can then be fed to the baby.

Infant formula should not be used unless necessary. Talk to a health care provider, a York Region Public Health nurse or lactation consultant about how and when to give supplements.

Bottle nipples and pacifiers should be avoided

Offering a bottle or a pacifier/soother may make learning how to breastfeed difficult for some babies. If babies need extra milk, mothers can try the following alternative feeding devices before using a bottle:

- Tube at the breast
- Finger-feeding tube
- Cup
- Spoon

Call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to learn more about these feeding methods

All babies need Vitamin D

Babies receiving breastmilk, whether exclusively or in combination with infant formula, require a Vitamin D supplement of 400 IU per day. If you have questions about Vitamin D supplementation, please speak with your health care provider. If you are only feeding your baby infant formula you do not need to give a Vitamin D supplement as infant formula already has Vitamin D added.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-800-361-5653

TTY: 1-866-512-6228

york.ca/breastfeeding