



# Breastfeeding: Getting Started

## *Knowing the basics*

Our goal is for you to have all the information and support you need to make breastfeeding successful and enjoyable, for both you and your baby. Before you see your provider today, ask yourself these 5 questions and write a short answer for each:

**1. Breastfeeding is the best way to feed newborns. Can you give 2 reasons why breastfeeding is good for you or your baby?**

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**2. Rooming in means that you and your baby will stay in the same hospital room. Why is this important for breastfeeding?**

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**3. Babies move their mouth and hands to show they are ready to feed. These are called *feeding cues*. Can you explain why it is important to feed newborns any time they show feeding cues?**

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**4. Your baby's deep attachment to your breast helps both of you. Why is a good latch needed?**

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**5. It is best for healthy breastfed babies to receive only breast milk. Can you list 2 ways that giving anything besides breast milk can cause a problem?**

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*We want to help your breastfeeding experience to be successful and enjoyable.*

***Please review this page with your provider when you talk today.***

### **Exclusive Breastfeeding**

- Promotes a healthy bond between mom and baby
- Lowers your risk of breast and ovarian cancer
- Helps you lose weight after giving birth
- Protects your baby against ear, urinary tract, lung, and stomach infections, diarrhea, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Lowers your baby's risk for diabetes and obesity later in life
- Costs much less than formula
- Begins baby's life with food that is "live," not processed

### **Rooming In**

Healthy full-term babies will leave mom's room only for a few minutes at a time for a hearing test, a weight check, or another type of test, if needed. This practice of "rooming in":

- Helps parents get to know their baby
- Promotes a healthy start to breastfeeding and cue-based care

Nurses will help you and your partner or family find ways to get rest and to comfort your baby while staying together.

### **Cue-based Breastfeeding**

- Allows your baby to take in the right amount of milk for their needs at the time. It is normal for some feedings to be long, and some to be short.
- Causes mom's body to make just the right amount of milk for the baby.
- Helps parents learn to know and meet their baby's hunger cues.

### **Position and Latch to Breast**

- Unwrap your baby for breastfeeding so that you are skin-to-skin with your baby. Your baby will stay warm when held against your body.
- Wait until your baby opens their mouth wide. A deep latch to your breast (not just to your nipple) can help your baby breastfeed well. It also helps prevent sore nipples.

### **Risks of Giving Pacifiers, Bottles, or Formula**

Adding formula to breastfeeding can:

- Change the way milk protects your baby from infection
- Cause constipation in your baby
- Decrease the amount of milk your body produces

Letting your baby suck on something other than your breast can:

- Decrease the amount of milk your body produces
- Make it harder for your baby to latch to your breast

### **Questions?**

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

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