

Physiologic Infant Care:

Supporting breastfeeding, sleep, and well-being

Welcoming a new baby can be challenging. Breastfeeding at night stimulates milk production. Night breastfeeding helps your baby grow.

At night-time:



Sleep near your baby.

You and your baby will fall asleep more easily. Consider using a co-sleeper attached to your bed (also called a sidecar). Breastfeed while lying on your side.

Avoid getting up at night. Sitting up and getting out of bed will disrupt your sleep. Skip most diaper changes at night. Protect your baby's bottom with a barrier cream. Breastfed babies don't usually require burping.

Keep the lights off at night.

Turning on lights disrupts your family's sleep. Avoid night-time activities that require lighting or use a dim red light. Close electronic devices.

Breastfeed at night rather than pump or use bottles, if you can. Your night-time milk contains melatonin. Melatonin helps your baby sleep. Pumping and bottle feeding disrupt sleep.

Avoid feeding solids or formula to improve sleep. Parents of formula fed babies may experience more sleep disruption than parents of breastfed babies. Giving solids or formula before 6 months may decrease milk production.

Do not sleep train in the first 6 months. It is not recommended in the first year. Instead, a cued care program for infant sleep can help parents cope.

Bedsharing safety is very important. Bedsharing is often unplanned. Everyone should make their bed safe for baby. See ABM's Bedsharing and Breastfeeding handout.



Feeding from the bottom breast. Breast can be supported on your bent elbow if desired.

In the daytime:



Wear your baby in a baby-wrap or baby-carrier.

Wearing your baby keeps baby calm. Your hands will be free to get things done. Make sure your baby's back is supported and your baby is held firmly to your body. Your baby's face should be free.

Daytime activity may help your baby sleep better at night. Expose your baby to normal daytime light and noises. Include some supervised tummy-time.

Nap when your baby naps, if you can.

Focus on your baby's behavior cues. Tracking apps are not needed.

Ask for help. Other caregivers can change, bathe, and dress your baby. They can help with cooking, cleaning, and older children.



Feeding from the top breast means you do not have to roll over to feed from both sides.

This information is a general guide to discuss with your health care professional. It may not apply to your family or situation.

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