

# 10 Reasons You Need to Call a Lactation Consultant

*Reading time: 3 minutes*



In the United States, nearly 80% of infants are breastfed at birth and only 49% are nursed after six months. The majority of women, who stop breastfeeding, do so because of discomfort or lack of support. Sadly, in the 1950's, there was a cultural shift away from breastfeeding, which has left many of today's nursing moms without experienced role models until now...

Today, new families have access to an extensive network of lactation consultants who can help transform a difficult breastfeeding experience into a rewarding one. A lactation consultant is a certified healthcare professional that understands the ins-and-outs of breastfeeding. Many nurses, pediatricians and medical professionals are certified, but private lactations consultants often conduct in-home visits and are covered by insurance; all you need to do is make a phone call.

Here are some instances you might encounter where you'll want to consult a lactation consultant.

- 1. Your nipples are sore** – This is one of the most common reasons moms stop nursing. Sensitivity is expected after delivery, but painful, cracked, or bleeding nipples means something's wrong with the latch. Call a lactation consultant.
- 2. Your baby loses 10% or more body weight** – A bit of weight loss after delivery is normal, but more than 10% might mean there's a feeding issue. Your doctor might refer you to a lactation consultant.
- 3. You've had a breast reduction or augmentation** – Neither of these procedures means you can't breastfeed, but you might face some additional challenges. A lactation consultant can give you guidance.
- 4. You're having latch troubles** – If your baby is having a hard time latching on to your breast or staying on for long periods of time, call a consultant. Sometimes you just need a change of technique or position.

**5. You had an unpleasable breastfeeding experience in the past** – Failure can be defeating, especially when you're an exhausted parent. If you had trouble in the past, speak up early to head off the problems.

**6. You are concerned about your milk production** – If you think you aren't making enough milk, a lactation consultant can determine if that's the case and give you some tips to increase your production and make sure baby gets it all.

**7. You are breastfeeding multiples** – Nursing twins or triplets is a whole different ball game. You'll need some special strategies that your doctor or mom friends can't provide.

**8. You are going back to work** – You've mastered breastfeeding, but now you have to figure out how to pump and safely store your milk. A whole new challenge!

**9. You had a complicated delivery** – Not all difficult deliveries affect breastfeeding, but some do (like ones with significant blood loss or high blood pressure). A lactation consultant can help you through these complications.

**10. You have questions** – It's impossible to determine every eventuality, so it's important to use a lactation consultant as regular resource. You might have questions about biting, introducing solid foods, introducing a bottle, how breastfeeding affects sleep, how to clear up thrush, when to wean, or a million other things. It never hurts to ask!

Some moms find breastfeeding easy, but *most* have to push through some obstacles before it becomes natural. If you need help, don't be afraid to ask.

What breastfeeding challenges did you face?

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