Information for Breastfeeding Families

Is My Baby Getting Enough?

Often a new parent's biggest concern is about how much and how often the baby breastfeeds.

Here are some guidelines to help you know if your baby is getting enough:

✓ Your newborn baby should nurse on demand, 8 or more times in 24 hours during the first 2 - 3 weeks. As your baby gets older feedings will become more efficient and may be less frequent.

✓ Some feedings may be close together, even an hour or so apart. Other feedings will be less frequent. Feedings do not need to be evenly spaced and are often irregular in the newborn baby. Wake your baby if he doesn't awaken to feed within 3 hours during the day. Night time feedings can be less frequent.

Typical patterns for wet diapers are	Typical patterns for stools are several per day
1 wet diaper on day one	Day 1 Meconium (dark & tarry)
2 wet diapers on day two	Day 2 Brownish
3 wet diapers on day three	Day 3 Brownish yellow
4 wet diapers on day four	Day 4 Dark yellow, soft
5 wet diapers on day five	Day 5 Yellow, semi-liquid
6 wet diapers on day six and from then on.	Some newborns stool after every feeding. Stools taper off and may not even occur every day as your baby gets older.
Look for light yellow to clear urine.	

Babies generally lose a little weight in the first few days after birth and then begin to gain. This is a normal pattern. Ten percent is considered the maximum acceptable weight loss. Have your baby's weight checked a couple of times during the first 2 weeks, especially if you are concerned that your baby is not eating enough. A weight check is the only sure way to determine adequate intake. Once your baby has regained birth weight, at about 2 weeks, you can relax and let your baby set the pace for the feedings.

Sometimes babies seem to take a good feeding at the breast but wake within a few minutes wanting more. Offer the breast again. It will likely be a short "top off" feeding and your baby will drop off to sleep.

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Signs of hunger	Signs of a good latch-on
Rooting Mouthing movements Tense appearance Grunting, other sounds Hand-to-mouth activity Kicking, waving arms Crying	Relatively comfortable, latch-on pain subsides quickly Lips at the breast at least 140° angle or greater All or most of the areola in the baby's mouth with more areola covered from the area near chin (asymmetrical latch-on) Lips flanged (rolled out)
Signs the Baby is Full	**Signs of a good feeding**
Drowsiness, sleepiness Baby comes off the breast spontaneously Relaxed appearance Hands and shoulders are relaxed Sleeps for a period of time before arousing to feed again	Easy latch-on, stays latched-on Swallowing you can hear Noticing that the breasts are softer after feedings Feeling strong, deep, "pulling" sucking Seeing milk in your baby's mouth Leaking from the other breast or feeling of a "let-down" reflex Vigorous sucking Wide jaw movements and consistent sucking

Please see the advice of a Lactation Consultant or another healthcare provider if:

1. Your baby has not begun to gain weight by his fifth day after birth or has not regained birth weight by 2 weeks
2. Your baby is not voiding at least 6 - 8 times per day
3. Your baby is not having several stools per day

These signs can indicate inadequate feedings and can become a serious concern if not corrected quickly. You may wish to keep a written record of when your baby voids, stools, and feeds for a few days so you can accurately report this to your health care provider. Please seek help if your problem does not resolve quickly.