



*My hospital gave me formula samples to take home with me. Does this mean my doctor wants me to use formula?*

No. Giving away free samples does not mean the hospital or your doctor want you to use formula! This is part of the company's marketing and advertising strategy to encourage mothers to start using that brand of formula. If you are given these marketing bags or samples, remember that giving baby any amount of formula decreases the amount of milk you make for your baby.

### *Should I stop breastfeeding if my baby is sick?*

If your baby is sick, continue breastfeeding and contact your doctor promptly. Your milk will keep your baby well hydrated because the milk is better absorbed than any commercial products, even electrolyte solutions. Human milk has important infection fighting ingredients to help your baby fight the illness and get well more quickly. It also helps comfort your baby while he is not feeling well.

### *What if I am sick?*

If you have a general, short-term illness like a cold or flu, your baby has already been exposed to those germs. By continuing to breastfeed, you give your baby the antibodies your body makes to help you fight off your illness, which helps your baby fight it off, too. Find a helper who can care for you and assist you to more easily feed your baby during your illness. If you have any other kind of illness or need to take prescription medications, talk with your doctor and IBCLC for information about breastfeeding for your situation. Most medications are safe to take while breastfeeding.

### *Who can I ask for help with breastfeeding questions or problems?*

IBCLCs are health professionals with special knowledge and experience in helping breastfeeding families. They can help you know how breastfeeding is going, answer your questions, help you find solutions, and give you options that help you meet your breastfeeding goals.

To reach an IBCLC in your area, contact:



Or visit the "Find a Lactation Consultant Directory" at the website of the International Lactation Consultant Association: [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org).



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*Especially for Mothers...*

## **Baby Steps: Simple Steps to Breastfeeding Support**



Breastfeeding gives your baby the best start in life possible with health benefits that last a lifetime. But the magic of breastfeeding goes beyond just the hundreds of special ingredients in the milk itself. Most mothers agree that the reason they breastfeed is to experience a special closeness with their baby, and to know their baby is warm, secure and loved. Simple baby steps can help you and your baby get off to a great start!

**Baby Steps:  
Simple Steps to  
Breastfeeding Success**





# Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success

## Before Your Baby is Born

- Learn all you can about breastfeeding! Visit [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org) to learn more.
- Tell your family and friends you will be breastfeeding so they can learn how to support you.

## After Your Baby is Born

- Hold your baby skin-to-skin for at least the first hour after birth. Your baby will use his instincts to find his way to the breast all by himself! Ask the nurse for help in knowing when your baby is ready to breastfeed.
- Room in with your baby so you can learn your baby's feeding signals or cues, and feed whenever he shows signs he is hungry.
- Feed your baby at least 8 to 12 times every 24 hours.

photo courtesy of Maureen Field



- Avoid supplements, pacifiers and bottles unless your doctor advises you to.
- Get help with any questions or concerns you have. While at the hospital, ask to see an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), a health care provider who specializes in helping mothers with breastfeeding. The International Lactation Consultant Association's "Find a Lactation Consultant Directory" at [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org) can also give you names of IBCLCs in your community who can help.

## After You and Your Baby Are Home

- Breastfeed exclusively for at least six months.
- Once you start other foods around six months, you can continue to breastfeed for at least a year, and for as long after that as you both want to.
- If you are returning to work or school, talk with your employer about bringing your baby to work, or expressing milk while you are at work so your baby can continue to receive your milk. It's also a great way to stay connected even when you must be apart!



photo by Vicky Leon, Australian Breastfeeding Assoc. [www.photosbyvickyleon.com](http://www.photosbyvickyleon.com)

# Solutions to Common Questions

## What can I do to be sure I make plenty of milk?

You can make plenty of milk for your baby! The best start is to hold your baby skin-to-skin right after birth until he latches on to your breast. This may take an hour or more, as your beautiful baby adjusts to the world outside the womb. After that, breastfeed at least 8 to 12 times every 24 hours. Feed your baby for as long as he wants on the first breast or until he slows down or stops suckling, and then offer the second breast. Your baby's stomach is very small and your milk is very easily digested, so frequent feeding helps your baby grow and helps ensure you will make plenty of milk. If your baby is not able to feed at the breast, talk to an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) to assist you and your baby to breastfeed. They can give you information on breastfeeding, and support you to hand express or obtain a hospital-grade breast pump to remove milk regularly.

## How can I be sure I'm making enough milk since I can't see how much he gets?

- Baby is getting enough breastmilk when he:
  - wakes and shows he is ready to feed 8 to 12 times every 24 hours
  - swallows steadily throughout the feeding
  - has 4-6 wet and 3+ dirty diapers each day after Day 5
  - is back to his birth weight by 10 days, and continues to gain around 4-7 ounces (120-200 grams) per week

You may also notice that your breasts are softer after feeding your baby.



## My baby seems to want to breastfeed all the time, even when I know he's not hungry.

Feeding babies often, following the guidelines above, helps assure that they are getting enough calories to grow and develop well. Babies also breastfeed for many reasons besides hunger. When he is breastfeeding, your baby is close to all the things that comforted him inside the womb: hearing your heart beat, feeling your breathing pattern, and enjoying the warmth and smells he is familiar with. Sometimes babies breastfeed more often when they need to be close to mother, are ill, or when they are frightened, lonely or uncomfortable. Sucking at the breast helps a baby tolerate discomfort, and releases hormones that help baby grow. Sometimes babies "cluster" feed, or eat more often during certain periods of the day. Holding and touching baby during breastfeeding reassures your baby that his world is safe. If you are worried that your baby is not doing well, even if he is feeding many times a day, use the checklist above to reassure yourself. If you want more help, contact your healthcare provider or IBCLC.

## How do I still breastfeed when I go back to work?

Breastfeeding can continue even when mothers have a busy schedule or return to work or school. Some mothers are able to bring their baby to work; others express their breastmilk during the day and give the milk to their child care provider to feed to the baby. If baby is near your workplace, you could consider breastfeeding at breaks or your meal period during the day. At home, continue to breastfeed exclusively so your body will make plenty of milk.