

Exclusive breastfeeding

Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breast milk for the first six months. Breast milk contains everything your baby needs.

Benefits of breastfeeding

For the person breastfeeding

- Reduces bleeding after childbirth
- Delays the return of your period and promotes weight loss
- Offers some protection against breast cancer, ovarian cancer and type 2 diabetes
- Free and environmentally friendly

For the baby

- Provides protection against many infections and illnesses
- Reduces the risk of obesity
- Promotes healthy development

Benefits of skin-to-skin contact

- Promotes parent-child attachment
 - Facilitates breastfeeding
 - Allows parents to react quickly to baby's feeding cues
- *It is very important during the first weeks.*

Expressing breast milk

1. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
2. Gently massage your breast.
3. Place your fingers and thumb behind the areola in a "C" shape.
4. Gently press the breast inwards toward your chest.
5. Gently compress your thumb and fingers together moving them towards your nipple.
6. Relax your fingers then repeat the same motion.
7. Repeat steps 4 to 6 on different areas of your breast. (Duration: 5 minutes)
8. Switch breasts and repeat.



Press, compress, relax

Baby's feeding cues

- Stirring, moving arms
 - Mouth opening, yawning or licking
 - Hand to mouth movements
 - Turning head from side to side
- *Crying and fussing are late feeding cues.*

Signs of an effective latch

Lips flanged out: wide, gaping mouth to accommodate areola and nipple

Asymmetric latch: more areola visible above the baby's top lip

Tummy-to-mommy: baby's ears, shoulders and hips in alignment

Chin touching breast: nose free in the sniffing position

Have a listen & watch: active suckling and swallowing indicating milk transfer





Storing breast milk

- Use clean glass or hard plastic containers that are BPA free, or bags designed to store breast milk.
- On the container, write the date and time you expressed the milk.
- If possible, refrigerate breast milk right after pumping
- Freeze breast milk if you do not plan to use it in the next 24-48 hours.
- Storage time may vary according to situations. Ask about your hospital's guideline.

Breast milk storage timeframe

Room temperature	Refrigerator	Freezer
4 to 6 hours	4 to 5 days	6 months

Signs that feeding is going well

Days old	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Feeding	8 or more feeds per day. Your baby is sucking strongly, slowly, steadily and swallowing often.							
Tummy size	Size of a cherry 		Size of a walnut 		Size of an apricot 		Size of an egg 	
Dirty diapers	At least 1 or 2 black or dark green		3 or more brown, green or yellow		3 or more large and soft yellow or brown			
Wet diapers	At least 1 wet diaper	At least 2 wet diapers	At least 3 wet diapers	At least 4 wet diapers	At least 6 heavy wet diapers			
Weight	Most babies lose weight in the first 3 days after birth. From day 4 onward, most babies gain weight regularly.							
Other signs	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily.							