

Breastfeeding: tips for expectant parents

Educate yourself

Become familiar with what breastfeeding will look like before your baby is born. Educate yourself on how to create a good latch and begin breastfeeding. A good place to start is the Stanford website (link below). Enlist a partner or support person to help you on your breastfeeding journey.

Hand expression

Practice **hand expression** of colostrum (the earliest form of breast milk) once you are “full term” (37 weeks gestation). Videos can be very helpful for learning how to hand express colostrum (links below). You can freeze expressed colostrum in syringes and save it (ask your doctor for a few syringes or purchase 5-10mL syringes at a pharmacy). Frozen colostrum can be used in the early postpartum period if your baby needs extra calories or if it takes time for your milk to “come in”.

Is the baby getting enough milk?

It is very uncommon for a mother’s breast milk supply to be truly insufficient to meet her baby’s needs for growth. **Your breast milk supply is going to be adequate!** If your baby is growing appropriately in the early stages and making wet/dirty diapers, then he/she is getting enough milk.

Optimizing early postpartum milk supply

- Good positioning – see video links below
- Empty the breasts frequently and completely
 - Allow the infant to drink its fill, for as long as required
 - Offer both breasts at each nursing session
 - Switch sides more often if your baby is sleepy
- Responsive, cue-based feeding
 - Feed your baby frequently; it may feel like your baby is *constantly* feeding!
 - It is normal for a baby to feed 8-16 times in 24h as a newborn!
 - Offer the breast whenever the infant shows signs that he or she may want to feed (crying, “rooting”, moving the lips and tongue)
- Significant pain or nipple trauma are **abnormal** and deserve assessment by a lactation consultant
- Avoid using pacifiers and bottles for the first few weeks of life and try to give your baby only breast milk
 - **BUT – if formula is medically indicated for your baby, it is safe**

Resources that can help you to be successful with breastfeeding:

- Stanford Medicine Newborn Nursery information and videos:
<https://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding.html>
 - Video on establishing latch and early feeding:
<https://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding/early-initiation-of-breastfeeding.html>
 - Video on hand expression:
<https://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-in-the-first-hour.html>
- Cindy & Jana – Saskatoon registered nurses and lactation consultants with a helpful website for breastfeeding parents
 - Information and video on hand expression:
<http://cindyandjana.com/how-to-do-hand-expression-of-breast-milk/>
- Link to an excellent presentation by Naida Hawkins (registered nurse and lactation consultant) about hand expression and breastfeeding:
<https://ehealthsask.webex.com/recording-service/sites/ehealthsask/recording/6984b7cf31b044b78dbc2c45c33ca9c9/playback>
- Breastfeeding Centre in Saskatoon – lactation consultants and doctors specializing in lactation medicine
 - West Winds Primary Health Centre (3311 Fairlight Drive) – call 306-655-4806 to book an appointment
 - Cornerstone Medical Clinic breastfeeding clinic – call 306-975-1262 to book an appointment
- Breastfeeding Café – drop-in support group Thursday mornings at West Winds Primary Health Centre (3311 Fairlight Drive)
- Saskatchewan Health Authority breastfeeding resources website – has links for videos, information, and for renting/purchasing breast pumps:
https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Breastfeeding/Pages/Resources.aspx
- Kelly Mom parenting and breastfeeding website:
<https://kellymom.com/category/bf>
- Dr. Jack Newman breastfeeding information sheets and videos:
<https://ibconline.ca/information-sheets/#>
- medSask (licensed pharmacists to provide evidence-based drug information through the U of S): <https://medsask.usask.ca>
 - Or connect by calling 811 (HealthLine)
- LactMed – for moms or providers to check compatibility of medications with breastfeeding: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/?report=classic>