

Addressing Your Concerns About Breastfeeding.

How do I know if I'm making enough milk?

Making too little milk is a big concern for all breastfeeding mothers. After all, you can't really see how much breastmilk your baby is getting. The fact is: most women make plenty of milk for their baby — or babies.

How does my body know how much milk my baby needs?

Your baby tells your body how much milk he needs by how often he wants to nurse. The way your breastmilk supply works is simple. Every time your baby empties the breast, your body will make more milk.

My mother couldn't produce enough breastmilk. Can low milk supply run in my family?

Low milk supply does not run in families. It is extremely rare that a woman is unable to produce enough milk to meet her infant's needs.

My baby cries all the time and all he wants to do is eat.

Babies can't sit up, roll over, or tell you what they need, so they cry for many different reasons. It isn't always because they're hungry. They may cry when they need to burp or dirty a diaper. Often, babies just need to be held.

Babies go through several growth spurts in the first year — usually when they are 7–10 days old, 6 weeks of age, and 3 months. Your baby may want to eat almost constantly for a day or two. That is normal and it doesn't mean you don't have enough milk.

My baby is satisfied longer after a formula feeding than he is after he breastfeeds.

Formula is much harder for your baby to digest and absorb, so it sits in his stomach longer. That means he does not eat as soon after a formula feeding as he would after a breastfeeding.

While formula may allow a break for you, it isn't necessarily good for your baby.

I've been using formula because I'm afraid I'm not making enough milk.

Can that decrease my milk supply?

Yes. When you feed your baby formula or water or allow your baby to suck on a pacifier for long periods without offering the breast, it can decrease your breastmilk supply.

To protect your milk supply, avoid using formula, water, and pacifiers. Remember — the more you breastfeed, the more milk you will make.

Signs that your baby is getting enough milk:

Your baby has a steady weight gain of 4–8 ounces a week.

Your baby appears satisfied after a feeding; his body relaxes completely.

Your baby has at least 6 wet diapers and 3 soft, yellow stools in 24 hours by his sixth day of life.

Who can I call for help?

If you have tried some of the tips for increasing your milk supply and still think you are not producing enough milk, call your local WIC or hospital breastfeeding counselor, or call the Texas Lactation Support Hotline at 1 (800) 514-6667.

Call your doctor if your baby is not gaining weight, has fewer than six wet diapers by his sixth day of life or three dirty diapers a day by his third day of life, will not wake up to nurse at least eight times a day, or falls asleep or stops nursing immediately after latch-on

Ten Ways to Make More Milk

1. Breastfeed or pump more frequently — or 10 to 12 times a day.

The best way to make more milk is to empty the breasts more often.

2. Nurse your baby at the earliest signs of hunger — small movements after deep sleep, stretching, bringing the hands to the face, turning the head to search. Wake your baby to nurse by undressing him and placing him against your bare skin.

3. Make sure your baby is positioned well — his mouth should be wide open with the tip of your nipple in the back of his throat, and his chin should be buried in your breast.

4. Let your baby end the feeding by letting go of the breast or falling asleep. Then burp him and offer the other breast. If your baby still seems hungry after the other breast, offer both breasts again.

5. Massage your breasts towards the nipple while your baby is nursing.

6. Avoid pacifiers, formula, and water bottles. All of your baby's sucking should be at your breast.

7. Most babies like to nurse more frequently at one time of the day. Nurse as often as possible during this period.

8. Sleep close to your baby — either in the same bed or same room. If you are uncomfortable with your baby in the same bed, keep his crib or bassinet next to your bed.

9. Pump after you breastfeed. Even if you don't get any milk, you'll be stimulating your body to make more.

10. Take your baby with you and nurse anywhere. Texas law says you have the right to breastfeed in public.

For breastfeeding help and information, call 1 (800) 514-6667.

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