



FEED YOUR WAY

What to **expect** when breastfeeding

Breast milk is perfectly designed for your baby. It gives your baby everything they need for the first six months of their life. You may be feeding your baby directly from your breast, expressing your milk for bottle feeds, or a combination.

Breastfeeding is a skill that you and your baby will learn together. No matter how you are breastfeeding your baby, all parents and babies go through similar stages in their journey.



What to expect at **two** days

The first milk you produce is called colostrum. It has lots of vitamins and antibodies and it is the perfect first food for your baby. A new baby's stomach is very small. They will need to feed little and often (usually every two to three hours). This includes during the night.

Breastfeeding your baby when they want to be fed and keeping them close to you will help your baby adjust to life outside of your body. You may feel some discomfort. If you experience any pain while you are breastfeeding (for example if your nipples are very sore or pinched) speak to your Family Nurse or Health Visitor. Sometimes very small changes can make feeding your baby more comfortable. Your Family Nurse or Nutrition Peer Support Worker can help with this. They can also refer you for extra support.

Ten days

At 10 days, you and your baby are continuing to get to know each other. Your baby is learning about their new world, and you are learning how to take care of them. You will both be getting used to your new routines, including feeding during the day and night. Your body should have adjusted to feeding your baby. Your breasts and nipples should feel more comfortable. If you are feeling any pain, speak to your Family Nurse or Nutrition Peer Support Worker. They may be able to suggest ways to make you feel more comfortable when feeding.



You might find that your baby becomes ‘fussy’ around this time. They might want to feed more regularly, often in the evening. This is known as ‘cluster feeding’. It can be tiring but it is nothing to worry about as long as your baby is feeding well the rest of the time. It might help to think of ways you can make yourself more comfortable while you are feeding – for instance, preparing snacks and drinks before you start and keeping them nearby.

Getting used to life with a new baby is wonderful, but it can sometimes feel overwhelming. Feeding will get easier as your baby grows. For now though, offer your baby a feed whenever they show signs that they are hungry. Remember, you cannot spoil a baby, so enjoy all of those cuddles.

Six to eight weeks

Your milk supply will now be well established. You may notice that your breasts don’t feel as ‘full’ anymore. This does not mean that you are making less milk – it means that your body is now in tune with your baby and is producing the amount of milk that they need.



Breastmilk is *amazing* because:

- Every time you breastfeed or give expressed breastmilk, you are sharing your immune system with your baby.
- Your body can recognise bacteria and viruses in your baby's body and environment.
- You will start to make antibodies and pass them to your baby through your breastmilk.

Your baby will be due to have their first vaccinations around now. Try breastfeeding your baby during their vaccinations, or afterwards – research shows that it may help reduce their discomfort.

As your baby is getting a little older, you might find that you are going out together more. You might also be introducing your baby to new places and people. It can feel daunting to breastfeed your baby outside of your home for the first time. Lots of parents find it easier with moral support, especially in the beginning. You could take a friend or family member with you, to help you feel more comfortable.

It is your legal right to breastfeed your baby wherever you choose too (as long as there isn't a health or safety risk to either of you). For more information, visit: feedyourway.co.uk

Three *months*

This is an exciting time for you and your baby. They may be rolling, reaching for interesting objects and even beginning to laugh!

All babies develop at their own pace, but you will start to notice a lot of changes during this time. For instance:

- Their sleep may be less settled.
- They may want to feed more often.



Research shows that breastfed babies wake up as often as babies who are given formula milk. However, breastmilk contains sleep hormones, so a feed is usually a good way to get your baby back to sleep.

Your milk supply is now well established. You might choose to start expressing your breastmilk. This means that your baby can be fed by someone else using a bottle. You can find out about expressing milk on the NHS website. You can also talk to your Family Nurse.

Six months

Your baby will now be reaching out, grabbing things, and very often putting them in their mouths! Your breastmilk will respond to this change in your baby's behaviour – it will now contain even more antibacterial and antiviral enzymes.

Many babies are ready to try to eat solid food when they are 6 months old. Your breastmilk continues to be amazing because:

- It will continue to offer them the best nutrition and protection as they explore solid foods.
- Your baby will have experienced different tastes through your breastmilk, so you may find that they enjoy a range of different food flavours.
- It will soothe your baby while they are teething.

You can continue to offer breastmilk to your baby during this time.

The world is starting to seem like a very exciting place to your baby. You might find that they are easily distracted when feeding. Some parents find feeding in a quiet and darkened room can help.

One year and beyond

Your baby will now have a varied diet and will be able to eat a range of different foods. They can now start to drink cow's milk too.

Your breastmilk will still offer them comfort, immune protection, and nutrition. As your baby has grown, their needs have changed – and your milk will also have changed to meet those needs.



You may choose to continue breastfeeding your baby beyond their first year. This is referred to as 'extended breastfeeding'. The World Health Organisation recommends breastfeeding up to two years old – and older if you and your baby wish to.

For more information, visit: www.laleche.org.uk/breastfeeding-beyond-a-year

For more information and useful support visit: feedyourway.co.uk



Making Nottingham a **breastfeeding-friendly** city.



This public health campaign was commissioned by Small Steps Big Changes (SSBC), which is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund's A Better Start programme. It was co-produced with SSBC partners and local parents.