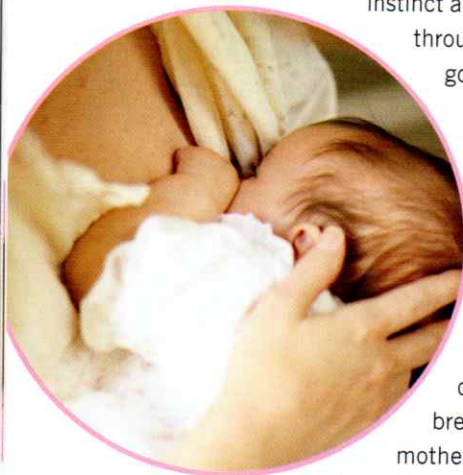


## Breastfeeding 101

by Kathleen E. Jones and Kimberly Kennedy

Breastfeeding is natural and better for baby, but women cannot rely on instinct alone to guide them. It is a learned skill, and women learn through experience. A woman must be comfortable and have good information and help to be successful. A Board Certified Lactation Consultant (BCLC) can provide excellent guidance.



Barbara Chaney, RN, BSN, IBCLC from Mercy Hospital, is an advocate for breastfeeding moms—including adoptive mothers. “In my 12-year career I have helped about a dozen adoptive moms with breastfeeding.” She says that usually adoptive moms can produce milk. They may or may not be able to breastfeed exclusively; but if it is possible for the adoptive mother to prepare in advance for the baby’s arrival, breastfeeding may be more successful. For more information on breastfeeding an adopted infant, visit [www.asklenore.info](http://www.asklenore.info).

### Advantages of breastfeeding

One of the big advantages is the cost. Feeding formula to a baby is expensive and often inconvenient—while the breast is always ready! The average cost of formula per month, based on 24 ounces per day of premixed ready-to-feed formula, is at least \$180.

Infants who are breastfed get antibodies that boost their immune system and help prevent ear and respiratory infections. They receive essential nutrition for growth, and they may have higher intelligence scores. Studies have shown that they have less risk of allergies, asthma, diabetes, and obesity.

The advantages for mom include lower risk of breast, ovarian, and cervical cancers. They are also less likely to develop osteoporosis and diabetes. Plus, that baby weight may come off more quickly!

### Tips for success

Put the baby to the breast as soon as possible after birth. When the baby is latched on correctly, you will feel a tugging or pulling with no biting or pinching sensations. According to Beth Vonluehrte, RN, IBCLC at Christ Hospital, “The number one thing is to help baby attach deeply to the breast so that milk release occurs and the baby begins to nurse in a smooth rhythmical pattern.”

## YOUR PREGNANCY

To keep milk in steady supply, make sure you are getting plenty of fluids and eating healthy. Lisa Sandora, MA, IBCLC at TriHealth says, "The most important thing is to feed frequently, at least 8–12 times per day, as the milk production is dependent on the removal of milk from the breast."

In the first few weeks, it's important to watch for baby's hunger cues: Sometimes babies just want to suck, and at other times they are ready to nurse. You will soon recognize the difference. You may find that your baby falls into a feeding pattern of every 2 1/2 to 3 hours. But be flexible: If she wants to eat after 1 1/2 hours and won't be held off by distractions, feed her.

### Concerns and solutions

Many mothers are concerned about adequate milk supply. Since there are no marks on the side of a breast to measure the quantity the baby has taken, you'll need to look for other clues like: 5–6 wet diapers per day, 2–5 bowel movements per day, and weight gain of at least 4–7 ounces per week after the fourth day of life. The infant should be alert and active and growing in length as well as head circumference.

Sore nipples can interfere with breastfeeding comfort. If this develops, coat them with expressed milk after feedings and allow to air dry. If problems persist, contact the lactation consultant from your delivering hospital, an independent consultant, or the La Leche League. Support from a professional or friend can make all the difference to your success!

Breastfeeding is an intimate—often spiritual—experience. Cherish every moment, knowing you are creating a special bond as well as providing all of your baby's nutrients!



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