

# Breastfeeding Guide for Expectant Moms



**Advent Health**

Wesley Chapel

## Supporting the health of mom and baby

You can have peace of mind knowing that when you choose to breastfeed, you're making a healthy choice for both you and your baby.

### **Breastfeeding mothers:**

- Experience less post-partum depression and bleeding
- Get back to their pre-pregnancy weight more quickly
- Have less risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer



### **Nursing babies:**

- Enjoy “built-in” protection against pneumonia, stomach flu, diarrhea, ear infections, obesity and high blood pressure
- Have less risk of developing chronic health conditions, such as allergies, asthma, type 1 and type II diabetes
- Have less risk of developing certain childhood cancers

And, your breastmilk is ideally suited to your baby. It changes based on your infant's nutritional needs, is always the right temperature and is ready whenever (and wherever) your baby is hungry.

For more information or questions, call  
**Lactation Services at (813)-929-5185.**





## Early skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby is important

You'll have an easier time getting started breastfeeding if you initiate skin-to-skin contact between you and your baby quickly after birth. You'll also increase the odds that you and your baby maintain a longer breastfeeding relationship: Babies who get skin-to-skin contact with their mother shortly after birth have an increased likelihood of being exclusively breastfed for the first one to four months of their lives.

Early skin-to-skin contact has benefits beyond breastfeeding, too. Babies who have early skin-to-skin contact have been found to interact more with their mothers — and to cry less.

Your AdventHealth maternity providers will work with you to create the right conditions for initiating breastfeeding so you and your baby can bond quickly and experience the benefits of breastfeeding for the long term.

## Plan for early skin-to-skin contact and rooming in

Keep your baby close will make it easier to breastfeed. Let your doctors and nurses in the maternity room know you want skin-to-skin contact with your baby as soon as possible after birth, and that you'd like your baby to sleep in a cradle in your room during your hospital stay.

### **Early skin-to-skin contact and rooming in helps to:**

- Calm and relax you and your baby
- Regulate your blood pressure
- Regulate your baby's blood sugar
- Transfer good bacteria to your baby that helps build up immunities
- Stimulate your baby's digestion

### **Rooming in on a 24-hour basis helps you:**

- Develop more confidence in caring for your infant
- Feed on demand or by infant cues, which we know to be better than on a schedule
- Get better sleep

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# Breastmilk has all the nutrients your baby needs

Your breastmilk contains all the nutrients your infant needs to grow healthy and strong during the first six months of life, and to safeguard baby from many childhood illnesses. It can have long-term benefits, too, like a reduced risk of childhood and adolescent obesity.

## Tried-and-true methods

### For healthy nursing and avoiding breastfeeding pain

When you're relaxed, your breast milk flows more easily. But it takes time to get comfortable with the process and to develop a nursing routine for you and your baby. In the meantime, it's quite normal to experience some anxiety. Gentle techniques, like deep breathing, can help calm you physically and mentally.

And, when you first start breastfeeding, it's common to experience some nipple soreness and pain, especially as your baby learns to latch. It will also take a few days for your skin to build resilience. Even so, some common breastfeeding issues can develop.

Being ready with some pain management and relaxation techniques will go a long way in helping you avoid or relieve the pain associated with breastfeeding and to help you and baby get the most out of this once-in-a-lifetime bonding experience.

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## Here are a few suggestions:

**Breathe deep and relax:** As you begin to nurse, take a deep, cleansing breath, hold it for several seconds and then slowly release it. Repeat this breathing exercise as many times as it takes to feel your body relax.

**Drink plenty of water:** Staying hydrated will help maintain your milk production. Aim to drink 16 eight-ounce cups of water each day. Keeping a glass of water at your side — and even your bedside — will ensure you have plenty of water on-hand whenever you're thirsty.

**Help your baby learn to latch:** The very first step in breastfeeding is guiding your baby to latch. Hold your baby to your chest between your breasts, letting baby tummy rest on your skin. Baby's natural reflexes will guide it to your nipple, and you'll see baby moving its head to look for it. Supporting baby's back and bottom, line baby's nose up to your nipple.

[For a video tutorial click here.](#) 

**Listen to music:** Turning the radio to a favorite station or keeping a breastfeeding playlist can help you create a more peaceful nursing environment that soothes you and your baby and encourages a strong bonding experience.

**Nurse frequently and completely:** Nursing frequently, on demand, can help you avoid clogged ducts. It also encourages healthy and steady milk production.

**Position yourself comfortably:** After your baby is latched, you can reposition to make sure you're both comfortable and well supported. This is important, because if you aren't comfortable — or if you aren't holding your baby correctly — it could cause you pain. You could try:

- Bringing your baby close to you, tummy-to-tummy.
- Holding your baby so baby's ear, shoulder and hip are in a straight line across your body.
- Placing your hands far back and away from your nipple if you need to support your breast.
- Supporting your baby's neck and shoulders.

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## Common breastfeeding conditions

Aside from the pain that's common for new, breastfeeding mothers, there are some conditions that can develop while breastfeeding. It's important to remember your AdventHealth certified lactation counselors and physician are always just a phone call away, ready with breastfeeding guidance and medical care, when needed.

### Clogged milk ducts

When your milk isn't removed from your breast in a timely manner, or if bacteria gets inside your breast, you can develop clogged milk ducts. Many women describe clogged ducts as feeling like there's a string or pea deep within their breasts.

While continuing to nurse frequently seems counter-intuitive, it can actually help to unclog them. And, drinking plenty of water can also get your breastmilk flowing again.

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## Mastitis

If you have breast pain combined with a fever, red streaks on your breasts or flu-like symptoms, contact your doctor right away. We can help you rule out mastitis or treat your infection with antibiotics.

## Tongue-tied baby

If your nipples hurt or it feels like they're being pinched while nursing, it might be because the skin beneath your baby's tongue is tight, making it hard for baby to lift it and latch on. This condition (called ankyloglossia) can be corrected with a very simple medical procedure where your baby's doctor snips this flap of skin so your baby's tongue can move more easily.

## Yeast infection

Sore, burning or painful nipples during (and in between) breastfeeding may be the result of a yeast infection. It's helpful to recognize these signs and symptoms:

- Fussy baby
- Pink or red rash on your breasts or smooth or shiny skin
- White dots or circles on the inside of your baby's lips, cheeks or on the roof of baby's mouth

Don't wait to call us for you or your baby. Your doctor can recommend a prescription, over-the-counter medicine or dietary changes to keep the pain from getting worse.

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## When to start solid foods

The World Health Organization recommends that infants start receiving foods in addition to breast milk at 6 months.

For optimal growth and development, your baby needs complementary foods:

- 2-3 times a day between six to eight months
- 3-4 times a day between nine and twenty-four months
- Additional nutritious snacks one to two times per day for ages twelve to twenty-four months, as desired.



As your baby grows, gradually increase food consistency and variety, adapting to baby requirements and abilities. Infants can eat pureed, mashed and semi-solid foods beginning at six months, and by eight months most babies can also eat finger foods (snacks she can put in baby mouth itself).

By the time your baby is 12 months, she should be able to eat the same types of foods the rest of your family eats, as long as those foods are nutrient-dense, such as lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products.

Avoid foods that may cause choking, like whole grapes or raw carrots. Limit juice and avoid drinks with low nutrient value, such as tea, coffee and sugary soft drinks.

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## Here for you when you need us most

Learning to successfully breastfeed is a process. It will take time for you — and for your baby — to find your rhythm. Be patient and kind to yourself.

It's likely you'll have many questions along the way. Remember, your AdventHealth certified lactation counselors are ready with all the support you need to successfully breastfeed. Because we know this is a magical time for you and your baby. And because we know it will strengthen you both in body, mind and spirit.

And should you need medical care, our doctors are ready for that too.

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