



FÉDÉRATION

Nourri-
Source

BREASTFEEDING A NEWBORN

A baby's behaviour can be surprising or worrisome during the first few days of life.



Most babies
will experience
4 phases

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PHASE 1: FROM BIRTH TO 4-6 HOURS AFTER BIRTH

Life Outside the Womb

- After birth, the baby is placed on the mother's stomach
- Baby is alert and active
- Given the right conditions, a newborn will crawl up to the breast
- The rooting instinct will be activated, and baby will begin to search for the breast on their own
- Ideally, babies should be allowed to follow their own instincts and senses
- Next, the baby will take a big mouthful of breast to nurse
- Babies usually latch on once or twice during the first 4 to 6 hours after birth
- Some babies may be tired out or sleepy after birth and take longer to reach the breast. They may even fall asleep and go directly to Phase 2.



Breastfeeding is more than just a source of nutrition. It is also a great way to build a strong bond between babies and their parents.

PHASE 2: FROM 4-6 HOURS TO 18-20 HOURS AFTER BIRTH

Recovery

- This is a time to rest, allowing baby and mom to recover from the birth
- It is also a perfect time to have baby skin-to-skin
- This is a special moment for the whole family to settle in together
- Baby will wake for short periods of time, so it is important to offer the breast as soon as they wake up
- Breastfeeds tend to be shorter during this phase as baby falls back asleep quickly
- The first milk produced is concentrated and energy-dense; a few drops are all it takes to fill baby's stomach (2.5 to 5 ml)

First milk: colostrum is rich in protein, antibodies, and minerals.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Try different positions to drain all the ducts in the breast
- If baby needs to be supplemented, hand expression works better than a pump because colostrum is thick and sticky

Careful for nipple confusion:



- Give baby expressed breastmilk with a cup or a spoon
- Avoid pacifiers, which can mask feeding cues and affect breastfeeding

PHASE 3 : BETWEEN 18-20 HOURS AND 36-48 HOURS AFTER BIRTH

Frequent Feedings

- Baby is more alert
- Will cue to feed every 1-2 hours, and sometimes non-stop for several hours. This helps get milk production started
- Baby may want to switch breasts several times before being satisfied; this period can be quite intense
- **Breast compressions** can help to increase the milk flow
- Ask for help from your healthcare team or consult **the Nourri-Source's Little Nursing Guide**
- This phase can be overwhelming for a new mother who is also experiencing hormonal changes. The non-breastfeeding parent can help by:
 - ⇒ Holding baby skin-to-skin
 - ⇒ Giving baby a bath
 - ⇒ Taking care of the mother (providing drinks, food, massages, etc.)
 - ⇒ Calling a breastfeeding support volunteer



These frequent feeds during the first few days are not necessarily reflective of the mother's milk supply, but is rather the baby's way of placing their order to ramp up production!

PHASE 4 : BETWEEN 36-48 HOURS AND 2 WEEKS AFTER BIRTH

Getting into the Rhythm

- The dyad is getting to know each other, and feeding cues are easier to recognize
- Breastfeeding takes place whenever baby shows feeding cues or is awake and alert
- Milk becomes more plentiful (aka “coming in”) between the 3rd and 5th day of life
- Feedings gradually space out as sleepy and alert periods start to fall into a pattern
- Little by little, baby drinks larger amounts of milk more quickly
- Milk flows more and more easily
- Some babies may need to be stimulated to feed, especially in the case of jaundice

Your nurse will tell you if your baby has any special needs; otherwise, most babies wake up on their own to feed.

Baby is gaining adequate weight (20 to 30 g a day)



WEIGHT

He periodically needs diapers and bigger clothes



GROWTH

The baby wets one diaper on Day 1 of life, two diapers on Day 2, and so on until Day 6; after Day 6, baby wets six diapers a day



WET DIAPERS

Baby is developing well according to his health professional



DEVELOPMENT

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Inspired by the brochure: The First Days With Your Baby at the Breast, 2009.

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Childbirth can be a stressful experience, physically and emotionally for both the newborn and their parents. The newborn needs time to adapt to life outside the womb.



After the birth, keeping baby in skin-to-skin with their parents while rooming-in and restricting visitors are all good ways to get breastfeeding off to a good start.



SIGNS THAT BREASTFEEDING IS GOING WELL

- ✓ Baby is sucking effectively and swallowing milk
- ✓ The latch is good and the mother is not experiencing any pain
- ✓ Baby seems satisfied after breastfeeding (falls asleep at the end of the feeding, face and body are relaxed)
- ✓ The baby's urine is pale and odourless
- ✓ The meconium was eliminated during the first two days of life
- ✓ The baby's stools change from greenish to yellow and mustardy, very soft and seedy, and the baby has several dirty diapers every day

The baby gets back up to birth weight around 2 weeks after birth.