

# BREASTFEEDING BASICS

Breastfeeding can be a rewarding experience that develops a special bond between mother and baby with benefits for both. Some nursing moms find breastfeeding easy and uncomplicated, while others find it more challenging. Preparing to breastfeed and surrounding yourself with a good support system can be crucial to the success of your experience. We recommend that you continue taking a prenatal vitamin while you nurse your baby. If at any time your breasts become painful, red, and very hard that does not relieve with breastfeeding, call the office. This may indicate an infection of the breast. You may continue to breastfeed.

## **Preparation Before Baby**

Take a breastfeeding class. Choose a doctor or nurse practitioner for your baby who supports breastfeeding. Join a support group for breastfeeding mothers. Find clothing that makes nursing easier, such as tops that button in the front. Prints hide leaks better than solid colors. Even if you do not plan to return to work, a breast pump can be helpful. Choose a pump that mimics the way a baby breastfeeds and is designed for comfort.

## **After Baby Arrives**

Focus on building a good milk supply. Drinking plenty of fluids such as water and nurse or pump your breasts often. Remember breast milk availability works on a supply and demand basis. Maintaining a good milk supply depends on the regular stimulation provided by the baby or by pumping. Remember, your breasts are never empty. Milk volume is greater in the morning. Three short 10 minute pumping sessions are more effective than one long one. Do not cut your calorie intake severely. Nursing moms need about 500 extra calories a day.

## **Breastfeeding checklist**

Nursing Bras

Nursing pads

Comfortable arm chair or rocking chair

Pillow on which to prop the baby or for support in bed

Lanolin breast cream for sore nipples

Footstool to bring your lap closer to your breast without putting strain on your back

Water and nutritious snacks

Breast pump (manual or electric)

Four ounce bottles with collars and nipples (for storage)

Bottle and nipple brush for cleaning

# BREASTFEEDING BASICS (Cont'd)

## Sore Nipple Prevention

Breastfeeding is meant to be a comfortable, pleasant experience. However, many new moms find their nipples are tender for the first few days when the baby starts nursing. This usually disappears in 1-2 weeks. **Correct positioning and latch** are essential to prevent nipple soreness. There are several different positions that can be used while nursing. It is important to alternate between at least 2 of these positions. Make sure the baby's lips are behind the nipple, encircling the areola. The tip of the baby's nose should be touching the breast. **Breastfeed frequently**, every 1 ½ to 3 hours. This helps avoid frantic feeding and vigorous nursing because baby is too hungry. This type of feeding can make your nipples tender. **Release the suction** before you remove your baby from the breast. Do this by placing a clean finger in the side of your baby's mouth between his jaws. Do not take them away until you feel the suction break. **After nursing your baby**, express a little breastmilk and massage it into your nipples and areola, then air dry.

## Sore Nipple Management

Nurse on the least sore side first. Express a little milk first to stimulate let down. Massage your breasts while nursing to help stimulate the milk flow. Use non-plastic lined bras and bra pads. Change the pads frequently to keep the nipple dry. Lanolin cream can be used to form a moisture barrier so they stay dry. Engorged breasts make it difficult for your baby to latch on. Expressing a little milk by hand or pump helps make the areola softer, the nipple more erect and latch-on easier. Wear multiple holed breast shells between nursing to allow air to circulate and protect your nipples from further rubbing by your bra.

## Storing Breast Milk

Always store breast milk in a clean, airtight container. Allow one inch at the top for expansion if you are freezing the milk. Breast milk can be kept at room temperature for about 4 hours and in the refrigerator for 72 hours. If you must keep it longer than this time frame, you can freeze the milk. Breastmilk should be placed in the freezer within 24 hours. Breast milk can be kept in the freezer for 6 months.