



## Information for Breastfeeding Families

# *Is My Baby Getting Enough?*

Often a new parent's biggest concern is about how much and how often the baby breastfeeds.

Here are some guidelines to help you know if your baby is getting enough:

- ✓ Your newborn baby should nurse on demand, 8 or more times in 24 hours during the first 2 - 3 weeks. As your baby gets older feedings will become more efficient and may be less frequent.
- ✓ Some feedings may be close together, even an hour or so apart. Other feedings will be less frequent. Feedings do not need to be evenly spaced and are often irregular in the newborn baby. Wake your baby if he doesn't awaken to feed within 3 hours during the day. Night time feedings can be less frequent.

Typical patterns for wet diapers are

- 1 wet diaper on day one
- 2 wet diapers on day two
- 3 wet diapers on day three
- 4 wet diapers on day four
- 5 wet diapers on day five
- 6 wet diapers on day six and from then on.

Look for light yellow to clear urine.

Typical patterns for stools are several per day

- Day 1 Meconium (dark & tarry)
  - Day 2 Brownish
  - Day 3 Brownish yellow
  - Day 4 Dark yellow, soft
  - Day 5 Yellow, semi-liquid
- Some newborns stool after every feeding. Stools taper off and may not even occur every day as your baby gets older.

Babies generally lose a little weight in the first few days after birth and then begin to gain. This is a normal pattern. Ten percent is considered the maximum acceptable weight loss. Have your baby's weight checked a couple of times during the first 2 weeks, especially if you are concerned that your baby is not eating enough. A weight check is the only sure way to determine adequate intake. Once your baby has regained birth weight, at about 2 weeks, you can relax and let your baby set the pace for the feedings.

Sometimes babies seem to take a good feeding at the breast but wake within a few minutes wanting more. Offer the breast again. It will likely be a short "top off" feeding and your baby will drop off to sleep.

## Is My Baby Getting Enough?

### Signs of hunger

Rooting  
Mouthing movements  
Tense appearance  
Grunting, other sounds  
Hand-to-mouth activity  
Kicking, waving arms  
Crying

### Signs of a good latch-on

Relatively comfortable, latch-on pain subsides quickly  
Lips at the breast at least 140° angle or greater  
All or most of the areola in the baby's mouth with more areola covered from the area near chin (asymmetrical latch-on)  
Lips flanged (rolled out)

### Signs the Baby is Full

Drowsiness, sleepiness  
Baby comes off the breast spontaneously  
Relaxed appearance  
Hands and shoulders are relaxed  
Sleeps for a period of time before arousing to feed again

### Signs of a good feeding

Easy latch-on, stays latched-on  
Swallowing you can hear  
Noticing that the breasts are softer after feedings  
Feeling strong, deep, "pulling" sucking  
Seeing milk in your baby's mouth  
Leaking from the other breast or feeling of a "let-down" reflex  
Vigorous sucking  
Wide jaw movements and consistent sucking

Please see the advice of a Lactation Consultant or another healthcare provider if:

1. Your baby has not begun to gain weight by his fifth day after birth or has not regained birth weight by 2 weeks
2. Your baby is not voiding at least 6 - 8 times per day
3. Your baby is not having several stools per day

These signs can indicate inadequate feedings and can become a serious concern if not corrected quickly. You may wish to keep a written record of when your baby voids, stools, and feeds for a few days so you can accurately report this to your health care provider. Please seek help if your problem does not resolve quickly.

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