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World Breastfeeding Week: August 1-7

2025 Invest in breastfeeding, invest in the future

What new moms should know about breastfeeding

1. Breastfeeding is a learning process. Just because breastfeeding is natural doesn't mean it comes naturally. Like anything new, you just don't know what you're doing until you do it. Be assured that most new moms feel that breastfeeding is hard in the beginning, so you aren't the only one. Everyone's experience is different, but most moms will experience bumps in the road, especially in the beginning.

It can be helpful to set short goals when you experience breastfeeding challenges. You don't have to commit to exclusively breastfeeding the first six months of your baby's life right away. Rather, do what you need to do to get through the next two hours or two days and then reevaluate. Try not to be discouraged with the hard moments. Instead, remember that it won't always be like that—it really does get easier over time.

2. A breastfeeding class can help expecting parents know how to prepare. If you're an expecting mom who plans to breastfeed, it can be helpful to attend a [breastfeeding support group](#) or attend an in-person breastfeeding class. Support groups can help you see how other mothers are finding success with breastfeeding and help you prepare for your own journey. And a [breastfeeding class](#) can help you learn about what to expect, practice different breastfeeding positions, and understand the support that is available to you once your baby arrives.

3. Babies have to learn how to latch. Just like you, your baby also needs to learn how to breastfeed. The first two weeks after your baby's birth is critical to establishing a milk supply and helping your baby learn how to latch correctly. A deep latch can take time and practice, so it's helpful to nurse your baby early and often. An ineffective latch can be painful, so call a lactation professional right away so they can help with tips, such as suggesting different positions, nursing props or other

latching techniques.

4. Breastfeeding can be painful at first. Because the baby is learning to latch, it's common for new breastfeeding moms to experience soreness. But there are many ways we can help to alleviate pain and discomfort. A lactation expert can help you learn to hand express your breastmilk or use a breast pump to feed your baby with a spoon or syringe so you can let your nipples rest. There are also different creams or ointments that can provide relief and help you avoid cracked nipples until your baby learns how to properly latch.

5. You don't have to wait three hours to feed your baby again. You may have heard that newborn babies need to eat every three hours, but you don't have to wait for that three-hour-mark. In fact, many babies begin "cluster-feeding" around 48 hours of life, wanting to nurse more frequently over shorter periods of time. If your baby shows signs of hunger or wanting to nurse for comfort, go ahead and feed your baby. This will help to signal your body to produce more milk which will help to establish a good supply. Cluster-feeding is also common throughout growth spurts during your baby's first year of life.

6. The more baby nurses, the more milk you produce. How does the body know how much milk to make? We have found that the more baby breastfeeds, the more milk Mom tends to produce. So if your baby eats often or you are pumping often, your body will make more milk to meet the demand.

7. Baby's diaper can assure you they're getting enough. New moms commonly want to know how to tell if their baby is getting enough milk. You can't measure breastmilk by the ounce unless you're pumping and feeding your baby with a bottle, but what goes in must come out. You can be assured that if you are feeding your baby at least eight times a day until they start eating

solids, and they are peeing and pooping, then your baby is most likely doing well. Your doctor can help you understand how many dirty diapers your baby should have in a given day so you can know if your baby is on track. If you have any concerns about your baby not getting enough milk, always talk to your pediatrician.

8. Breastfeeding can burn 500 to 700 calories each day, but that doesn't necessarily mean you'll lose weight. Your body is working hard to produce milk, even while you are at rest. For some women, the added caloric burn can help them to shed any [weight gained during pregnancy](#). For others, breastfeeding can make you hungrier and actually cause you to gain weight. Everybody is different, so don't compare your postpartum body to anyone else's. Celebrate the job your body is doing to feed your baby!

9. Breastfeeding is hard work. Be sure to take care of yourself. Breastfeeding and motherhood in general require a lot of time and energy. You probably feel like you don't have any time to care for your own needs, but it's important to find a way. Don't forget to drink water, eat when you are hungry, and, if you can, ask someone to hold the baby so you can nap.

10. Support can make your breastfeeding journey easier. While many mothers may feel the need to do it all, it's not actually possible. That's why it's important to ask for help, especially in the first few weeks and months of your baby's life. Whether you reach out to another mom you trust, family, or a breastfeeding support group, connecting with others about your experience can help you gain strength to overcome any hurdles you encounter. And, others who have gone through similar situations can help you to know that you aren't alone.