

# ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ Discharge Instructions ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

## Building your milk supply:

- Feed early and often, at the earliest signs of hunger.
- 8-12 feedings per 24 hours is expected, although these feedings may not follow a regular schedule.
- Avoid pacifiers or bottles, at least in the first 4-8 weeks.
- Frequent feeds, not formula: Only use formula if there's a medical reason.
- Sleep near your baby, even at home. Learn to nurse lying down.

## Feed at the earliest signs of hunger:

- Hands to mouth, sucking movements.
- Soft cooing, sighing sounds, or stretching.
- Crying is a late sign of hunger: don't wait until then!

## Watch the baby, not the clock.

- Alternate which breast you start with, or start with the breast that feels most full.
- Switch sides when swallowing slows or infant takes himself off.
- It's OK if baby doesn't take the second breast at every feed.
- Help baby open his mouth widely: tickle his upper lip, or use your nipple to stroke his chin.
- If the baby is sleepy: skin-to-skin contact can encourage feeding:
  - ▲ Remove baby's top and place him on your bare chest.

## Look for signs of milk transfer:

- You can hear the baby swallowing or gulping.
- There are no clicking or smacking sounds.
- Baby no longer shows signs of hunger after a feed.
- Baby's body and hands are relaxed for a short time.
- You may feel milk let-down:
  - ▲ You may feel relaxed, drowsy, or thirsty, and you may have tingling in your breasts.
  - ▲ You may feel some contractions in your uterus, or your other breast may leak milk.
- You should feel strong tugging, but NOT persistent pain. Proper latch prevents pain:
  - ▲ "chin-to-breast, chest-to-chest"
  - ▲ "flip lips for a sip:" baby's lips flare outward
  - ▲ wide open mouth: baby's mouth covers most of the areola (dark area of breast)—not just the nipple.
- Baby has adequate weight gain: follow up 2 days after discharge and again at 2 weeks.

## What goes in, must come out. Look for:

- 3 bowel movements every 24 hours by day 4
- Bowel movements change from dark black to green/brown to loose yellow as your milk comes in.
- 6 wet/heavy diapers a day after day 4

## Over time:

- All babies have days when they nurse more frequently. This doesn't mean you aren't making enough milk.
- Responding to feeding cues helps babies to regulate milk supply.
- Breast swelling normally lessens at about 7-10 days and it is NOT a sign of decreased milk supply.
- Your milk may look thin or bluish, but it contains plenty of nutrients.

## If you choose to share a bed with your baby:

- Keep the bed away from walls on both sides to avoid entrapment.
- Avoid heavy blankets, duvets, or pillows.
- Avoid soft surfaces such as waterbeds, couches, and daybeds.
- Neither parent should be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or medications that would affect the ability to wake up.
- As with sleeping separately, put the baby to sleep on his back.
- Do not allow the baby to sleep alone on an adult bed.
- Do not allow anyone except the baby's parents to share a bed with the baby.
- Because the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is higher in children of smokers, parents who smoke should not bedshare, but may sleep with the baby nearby.

**If you have questions, persistent pain, or can't hear swallowing, ask for help right away!**



© 2004 Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition

Massachusetts  
Breastfeeding  
Coalition

254 Conant Road, Weston MA 02493  
www.massbfc.org