

Tips for getting breastfeeding off to a good start

Make sure your baby is properly attached to your breast - so baby gets the milk well, you don't get sore and your milk supply is established.

Night feeds are important - the hormone that makes milk is higher at night, so night feeds help to keep up your milk supply. Also, baby has a tiny tummy and needs to feed often including at night.



Try not to give your baby other food or drink - if baby takes less of mum's milk they have less protection from illnesses. This can also reduce milk supply as milk is made when baby sucks at the breast.

If you want to use a dummy try to wait until breastfeeding is established - usually around 4 to 6 weeks. Babies who have a dummy or bottle teat sometimes find it hard to remember how to attach to mum's breast.

Help and Support with breastfeeding - it can take a while to feel confident. You can get support by:

- Contacting your Midwife or Health Visitor
- Attending a Breastfeeding Group; to find your nearest group contact your Children's Centre or ask your midwife or health visitor
- Calling the National Breastfeeding Helpline 0300 100 1212
- Watching videos like these: <https://globalhealthmedia.org/videos/breastfeeding/>

References: Images and content from 'Off to the best start' (2015) leaflet by DOH and content from 'Building a Happy Baby' (2016) leaflet by Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative.

Developed with assistance from Sleaford Breastfeeding Group

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

Antenatal Leaflet: Feeding and Caring for your Baby

Meeting your baby for the first time: skin to skin contact

After your baby is born, spending time in skin to skin contact will calm baby, keep baby warm, help regulate baby's breathing and heartbeat and gives you both a chance to rest and get to know each other.

This is a great time to start breastfeeding as your baby might move towards the breast and begin to suckle.



Maternity Services

Pilgrim Hospital Maternity Ward	01205 445429
Grantham Midwives	01476 464334
Lincoln County - Nettleham Ward	01522 573134

www.ulh.nhs.uk

Thinking about feeding your baby

During pregnancy is a good opportunity to discuss with your midwife some of your experiences and thoughts about feeding your baby. Your midwife will be happy to discuss any worries and concerns.

When to feed your baby

Babies need to feed frequently because their tummies are small and breastmilk is easy to digest. It is normal for babies to feed 8 to 12 times in 24 hours, sometimes babies have several feeds close together in 'clusters'.

You will know your baby is ready to feed by watching for feeding cues:

- waking up
- wriggling, moving arms or legs
- rooting - opening mouth and turning head from side to side
- sucking fists
- murmuring noises

Don't wait until baby is fussy and crying as it is hard for babies to feed when they are upset.



Breastfed babies cannot be overfed

Breastfeeding can be used at any time to comfort baby, as a way of spending time together and whenever mum or baby want a rest.

Babies can't be 'spoiled'

You can't spoil a baby by responding to them. Keeping baby close and comforting baby helps baby **feel secure** and is good for **brain** development. Things that help baby to feel secure:

- Keeping baby close to you all the time
- Feeding when baby shows feeding cues
- Skin to skin contact
- Talking to baby
- Not leaving baby to cry
- Cuddling and holding baby

Positioning baby for breastfeeding

There are lots of different positions for breastfeeding. Your baby needs to get a large mouthful of breast from underneath the nipple to get a **comfortable** latch and to **get the milk easily**.

When holding your baby for breastfeeding, you can check the following:

- Your baby's head and body are in a straight line
- Your baby is held close to you
- Your baby's head is able to tilt back easily
- Your baby's nose is opposite your nipple
- You are comfortable



How baby attaches to the breast

When baby opens their mouth wide, like a yawn, bring baby to the breast quickly, with the chin leading. As baby attaches, keep baby's bottom lip well below the nipple and aim the nipple to the rear of the roof of the mouth.

Signs your baby is feeding well

- It doesn't hurt when your baby feeds (although the first few sucks may feel strong)
- Your baby's chin is firmly touching your breast
- Your baby's mouth is open wide
- Your baby's cheeks are rounded during sucking
- If you can see the dark skin around your nipple, you should see more dark skin above baby's top lip than below baby's bottom lip
- Your baby rhythmically takes long sucks and swallows (with occasional pauses)
- Your baby is content during the feed



It can take a little while for baby to establish a good latch, plenty of practice following the steps above will help baby to learn.