

5 Steps to help you breastfeed

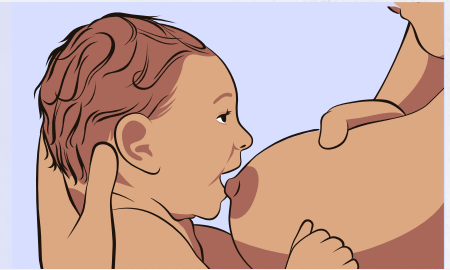
1

Connect with baby. Hold your baby against your bare chest in a comfortable position. Let your bellies meet. This skin-to-skin moment is how babies feel safe and loved, it reminds them of the womb. Breathe together. Rest together.



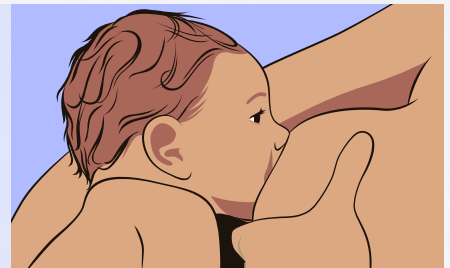
2

Guide baby's feeding. Bring your baby close, with their nose level to the nipple. Using one hand to support their head and neck, slightly tilt the baby's head back. With the other hand hold the breast, gently brush the lip with your nipple. This will encourage the baby's mouth to open wide.



3

Working together for a good latch: As the baby opens their mouth, their chin is able to touch the breast first with their head tilted back. Guide the nipple to the roof of the baby's mouth to get a full mouth of the breast. As the baby suckles, it should not hurt. There should be a suck swallow rhythm. If it hurts, unlatch and start over.



4

Help baby rest between sides. When the baby finishes feeding, gently hold them upright on your lap, heart to heart. Support their chest and head with one hand and softly rub or pat their back. After the baby settles, offer the other breast.



5

Unlatch with care. If you need to end the feeding or relatch your baby, slide your pinkie into the corner of their mouth and gently break the seal of the breast to gently unlatch. This keeps the moment soft and respectful for you both. Pulling baby away abruptly can hurt and cause nipple pain.



Breastfeeding holds

There are many ways to hold your baby while nursing. Each family finds what feels right through practice and connection. You might use a blanket, pillow, or your arms to support the baby's body. Some holds, like across your chest or tucked under your arm (football) can help guide baby's latch, especially in the beginning.

Follow your body, listen to baby's cues, and try these holds when starting out:

Cross-cradle hold



Cradle hold



Football or clutch hold

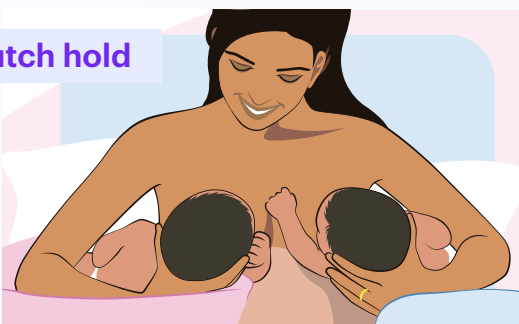


Side-lying hold



Holds for breastfeeding multiples If you're nursing more than one baby, start slow. Feed one baby at a time so each one can learn how to latch and feel your rhythm. Once you both feel ready, you can feed them together. Trust your body. It knows how to care for more than one. Let each baby learn in their own time, and lean on your helpers when you need support.

Double clutch hold



Cradle and clutch hold



Using a breast pump

There are times you may want to express your milk from your breast and save it for later to feed your baby. It could be time when you have to return to work or you're separated from your baby. At first, expressing milk might feel unfamiliar, but it gets easier with time and practice. Choose what fits your rhythm and daily life. However you do it, your milk carries love and nourishment for your baby.

You can hand express or use a breast pump.

Hand expression

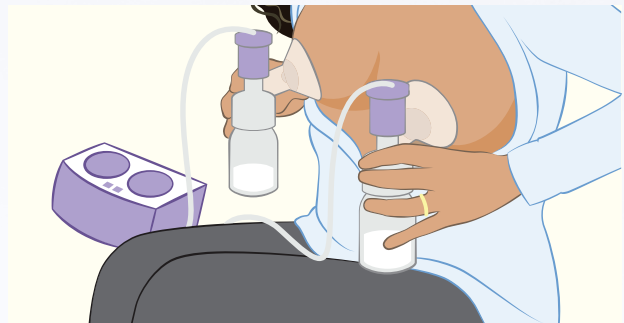
- ✓ **Wash hands.** Massage gently around the breast tissue and ducts. You can tap and brush your fingers onto your breast to increase oxytocin. This is a hormone that helps your milk flow.
- ✓ **Hold** your breast with your fingers and thumb cupped around your breast in a C or U shape, near but not touching your areola.
- ✓ **Gently press** your fingers and thumb back towards your chest. Compress your breast between your fingers and thumb, moving them slightly towards your nipple in a rolling motion.
- ✓ **Release the pressure** without moving your hand from your breast. Repeat and rotate, moving your hand to a different place around your breast after every few compressions or whenever milk flow slows down or stops. Releasing and repeating rhythmically helps to mimic the action of a baby breastfeeding.

It can take time to find what works best for you. It should feel comfortable and support your sense of control over your body.

There are different kinds of pumps that use batteries, electricity, or manually by hand. Some pumps collect milk from one breast, and others do both at a time.



Manual breast pump



Double electric breast pump

You can ask a nurse, Birthworker, auntie, or lactation helper to show you how to hand express and use a breast pump.

Keeping your milk safe for later

If you're saving your milk to feed baby later, **there are simple ways to keep it fresh and protected.**

You can use special bottles or storage bags made for holding breast milk. These are usually plastic or glass and can be found in most stores.

A small cooler or insulated bag can help keep your milk cold while you travel or until you return home. However you store it, know that your milk holds medicine, love, and nourishment, just like when a baby feeds at your breast.

Storage locations and temperatures

Type of breast milk	Counter top 77° F (25° C) or colder	Refrigerator 40° F (4° C)	Freezer 0° F (-18° C) or colder
Freshly expressed or pumped	▶ Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Within 6 months is best; up to 12 months is acceptable
Thawed, previously frozen	▶ 1-2 hours	Up to 1 day (24 hours)	NEVER refreeze human milk after it has been thawed
Leftover from a feeding (baby did not finish the bottle)	▶ Use within 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding		

* This information was adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Human Milk Storage Guidelines, Revised 2023