

فقيه.

مستشفى فقيه الجامعي
Fakeeh University Hospital
By Fakeeh Health



YOUR BABY, YOUR MILK, YOUR POWER

DEAR PARENTS,

WELCOME TO THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY – ONE FILLED WITH LEARNING, BONDING, AND LOVE. THIS STORYBOOK IS CREATED ESPECIALLY FOR YOU, TO GENTLY GUIDE AND SUPPORT YOU THROUGH THE EARLY DAYS OF BREASTFEEDING.

AS HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND PASSIONATE ADVOCATES FOR PARENT-CENTERED CARE, WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY FAMILY DESERVES ACCESS TO CLEAR, COMPASSIONATE, AND CONSISTENT INFORMATION.

WHETHER YOU ARE JUST BEGINNING OR SEEKING CONFIDENCE IN YOUR CHOICES, KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE – WE ARE HERE TO WALK BESIDE YOU.

TOGETHER, LET'S GIVE YOUR BABY THE BEST POSSIBLE START IN LIFE.

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FAKEEH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - DUBAI

A Place That Welcomes Breastfeeding

When you come to our hospital, you will find a place that supports you and your baby from the very beginning. **Our team is trained** to help mothers and families understand how to start and continue breastfeeding. We know that breastfeeding is not always easy, but you are not alone.

In our hospital, nurses and doctors learn special ways to support you with breastfeeding. We also have a special **Lactation Clinic**, and **Antenatal Classes** where breastfeeding experts can help you if you have questions or face any problems.

We believe in giving clear, honest advice. That's why **we do not give or promote baby formula unless your baby truly needs it**. We follow international rules to protect you from being confused by advertising or free samples.

And every third Wednesday, we have a group session called "**Life Cafe**," where parents can ask questions, share experiences, and learn more about breastfeeding and baby care.



THIS IS A SAFE PLACE FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY. YOUR CHOICES MATTER, AND WE ARE HERE TO GUIDE YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

Only Breast Milk for the First 6 Months

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Your baby is small, but their needs are big. To grow well and stay healthy, your baby only needs one thing for **the first 6 months: breast milk.**

Breast milk is natural, warm, clean, and full of everything your baby needs – **food, water, and protection.**

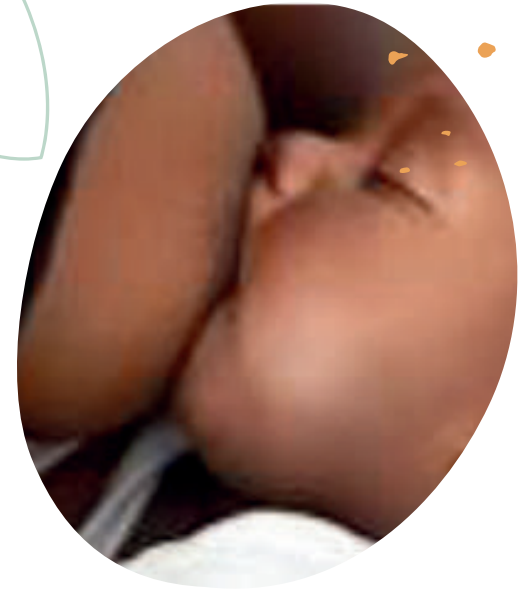
Giving water or tea or formula milk to your baby can:

- Fill your baby's tiny tummy, so they don't want to breastfeed
- Increase the risk of infection or allergies
- Reduce your milk supply



Remember:

- Breast milk changes with your baby's needs
- **It is the perfect food**, even on hot days – no extra water is needed
- Feeding only breast milk helps your baby grow strong and keeps your body making more milk



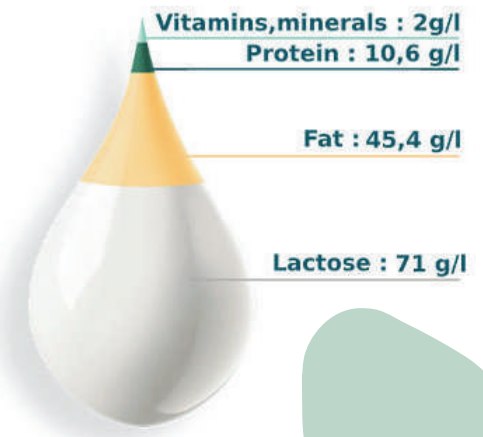
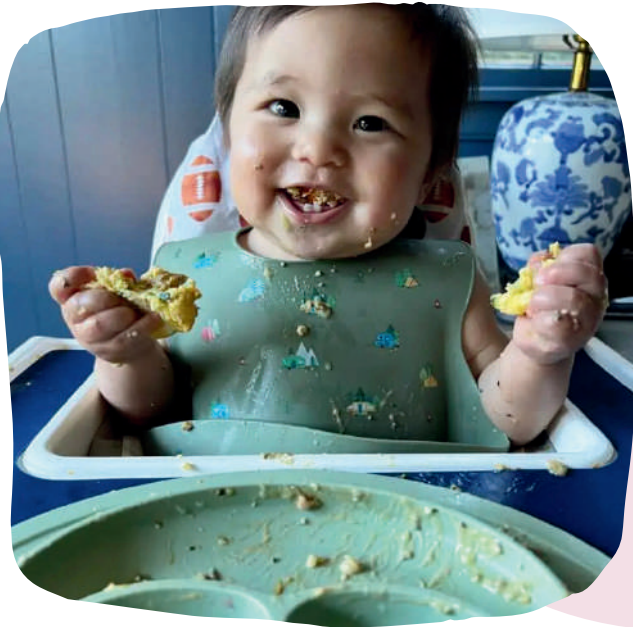
THIS IS YOUR BABY'S
BEST START – SIMPLE,
NATURAL,
AND POWERFUL.

Keep Going - Breastfeeding Beyond 6 Months

When your baby turns 6 months, they're ready to **start trying soft foods**. But even then, your breast milk is still very special. It continues to give your child **energy, protein, and important nutrients like vitamin A and iron**.

These help your child grow, stay strong, and fight off sickness. In fact, as long as your child keeps breastfeeding, **your milk helps protect them from diseases**.

That's why the World Health Organization says it's best to keep **breastfeeding alongside family foods** — until your child is 2 years or older.



BREASTFEEDING IS MORE THAN JUST FEEDING. IT'S LOVE, PROTECTION, AND A POWERFUL CONNECTION THAT STAYS IMPORTANT AS YOUR BABY GROWS.

Why Breastfeeding Matters

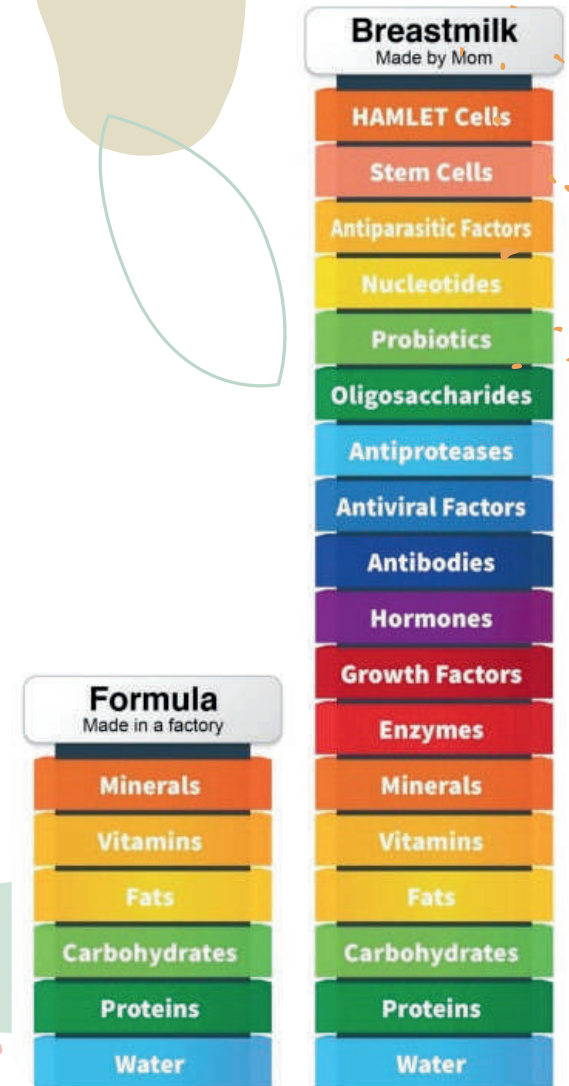
Breast milk is more than just food — it's **your baby's first protection**. It's full of antibodies, which are special fighters that help protect your baby from infections. That's why we call it "**the baby's first vaccine.**"

Unlike formula, breast milk is gentle on your baby's tummy. It's easier to digest, which means less spit-up and **less chance of constipation**.

And for you, breastfeeding brings many gifts too. Your milk is always ready — warm, clean, and with no need to prepare anything. **It also helps you bond closely with your baby, feel calm, and even return to your pre-pregnancy weight more quickly.**

Breastfeeding **lowers your risk of breast cancer**, ovarian cancer, and diabetes. And because it's free, it saves you money too.

BREASTFEEDING IS GOOD FOR YOUR BABY,
GOOD FOR YOU,
AND GOOD FOR YOUR FAMILY.



Heart to Heart - Skin-to-Skin Contact

Right after birth, one of the best things you can do is hold your baby close on your bare chest. This is called **skin-to-skin contact**, and it brings powerful benefits.

It helps your baby feel calm and safe. **Their heartbeat and breathing become more steady, and their body stays warm.** Skin-to-skin also helps your **baby's sugar levels balance, and reduces crying** — saving energy for growing.

But it's not just good for the baby. **It helps you feel calm too, and builds a strong, loving bond between you and your little one.** It also lets your baby pick up your natural, healthy bacteria — which protects their tummy.

Every mother and baby who are stable should enjoy skin-to-skin for **at least one hour after birth.**

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE START TO LIFE — AND IT BEGINS
WITH YOUR TOUCH.



The First Hour Counts

The **first hour** after your baby is born is very special. It's the perfect time to begin breastfeeding. Starting early helps your baby learn to latch, and it helps **your body begin making milk**.

Breastfeeding in the first hour also helps you and your baby feel close and calm — it's the start of a **strong connection**.

If, for any reason, your baby cannot be with you right after birth, it's important to express milk by hand within the **first 2 hours**.

This helps your milk come in and keeps your body **ready** for breastfeeding.



STARTING EARLY MAKES A
DIFFERENCE — BABIES WHO
BREASTFEED EARLY OFTEN
BREASTFEED FOR LONGER AND
WITH FEWER PROBLEMS.

Getting Comfortable - How to Hold Your Baby for Feeding

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Breastfeeding works best when both you and your baby are **comfortable**. The way you hold your baby can help them feed more easily and prevent pain for you.

Keep your baby close to your body, facing your breast. Their head, shoulders, and hips should be in **a straight line**. Make sure your baby is well **supported** so they feel **secure and relaxed**.



Natural position



Cradle



Cross cradle



Side lying



Underarm



You'll know feeding is going well when your baby takes **slow, deep sucks with quiet swallowing sounds**. **Their cheeks stay full**, not pulled in, and they feed calmly.

When your baby is done, **they stop on their own** — full, happy, and ready to sleep. Your breasts **feel softer**, and most importantly, you feel **no pain**.

WITH THE RIGHT
POSITION AND A GOOD
LATCH, BREASTFEEDING
BECOMES EASIER AND
MORE ENJOYABLE FOR
BOTH OF YOU.

**Asymmetric latch; more
areola visible above top lip**

Nose free

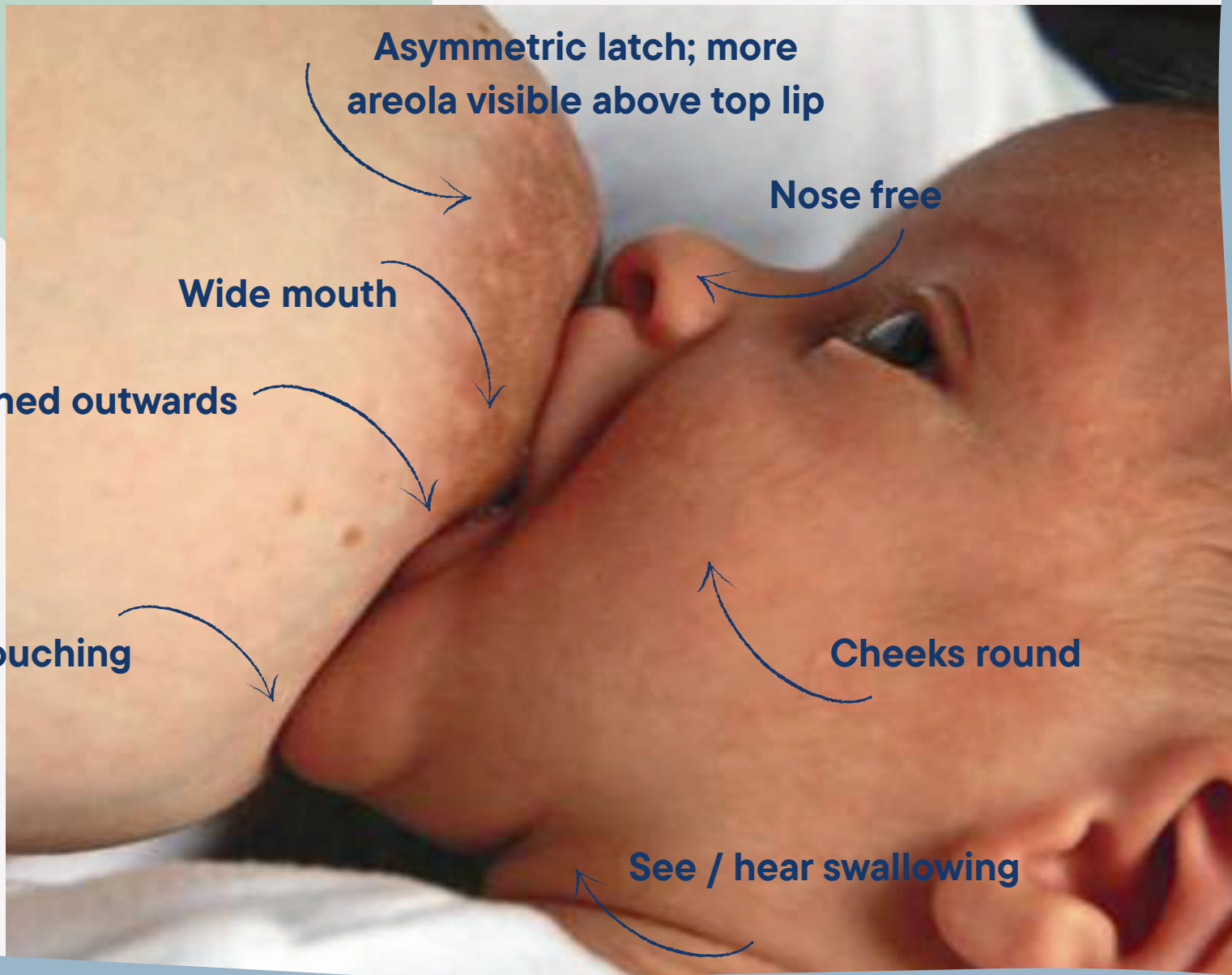
Wide mouth

Lip turned outwards

Chin touching

Cheeks round

See / hear swallowing



Caring for Yourself - Comfort While Breastfeeding

In the beginning, your nipples may feel tender — but **breastfeeding should not be painful**. If it hurts, it's often because the baby isn't latched properly.

Good positioning and a deep latch help prevent sore or cracked nipples. If you're unsure, **ask your nurse or lactation consultant to check** how your baby is feeding.

If your nipples feel dry or sore, you can express a few drops of your own breast milk and gently rub it on. It's soothing and helps protect against infection. You can also use lanolin cream or coconut oil for comfort.



If your baby latches the wrong way, don't pull — gently break the suction by placing your finger in the corner of their mouth, then try again.

Make sure that you **eat as healthy as possible**, small frequent meals, **drink lots of water** and **rest**. There is no restrictions on food while breastfeeding.



WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT, BREASTFEEDING
BECOMES MORE COMFORTABLE FOR BOTH OF YOU.

When Breasts Feel Too Full - Understanding Engorgement

Sometimes, a few days after birth, your breasts may feel very full, firm, and sore. This is called **engorgement**, and it can happen when your milk is coming in. Your breast may be red, with veins visible and enlarged.

The best way to relieve this is to **breastfeed often**. Let your baby feed as much as they want, and **make sure they are well positioned and latched — even if your breasts feel tight**.

If your baby finds it hard to latch, you can gently express some milk by hand or use a pump to soften the area. This makes it easier for your baby to start feeding.

After feeding, a cold compress can help reduce swelling and bring comfort.

If you notice pain, redness, fever, or flu-like feelings, it might be a sign of infection (called **mastitis**). Please contact your healthcare provider or lactation consultant right away.



WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT, ENGORGEMENT CAN BE MANAGED — AND
BREASTFEEDING CAN CONTINUE SMOOTHLY.

Feeding with Love - Listening to Your Baby's Cues

Early cues *"I'm getting hungry."*



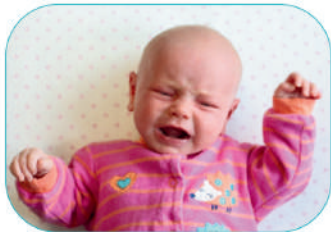
- Waking up
- Small movements
- Mouth opening
- Turning head

Mid cues *"I'm really hungry."*



- Stretching
- Increased movement
- Hand to mouth

Late cues *"Calm me, then feed me."*



- Crying
- Agitated movement
- Turning red

Breastfeeding works best when you **follow your baby's lead**. This is called responsive feeding — it means feeding your baby whenever they show signs of hunger, not by the clock.

Your baby will give you **little signals when they're hungry**: moving their head side to side, putting their hands to their mouth, or making soft sucking sounds. These are called **hunger cues**.

Let your baby feed for as long as they need. When they're full, they'll let go of the breast on their own.

Feeding your baby when they ask — and for as long as they want — helps your body make the right amount of milk and prevents your breasts from becoming too full or sore.

TRUST YOUR BABY, AND TRUST YOURSELF.
YOU ARE LEARNING TOGETHER.

Special Note: Your Milk Changes — And Night Feeding Matters

In the first few days after birth, your body makes a special milk called **colostrum**. You may only see a few drops, but it's **very powerful** — full of protein and antibodies to protect your baby from sickness. It's often called “**the first vaccine.**” It also helps your baby pass their first sticky stool, called meconium.

As breastfeeding continues, **your milk changes**. At the start of a feed, your baby gets **foremilk**, which is watery and helps with thirst. As the feeding goes on, they get **hindmilk** — which is rich and creamy, full of fat and energy to help them grow. **That's why it's important to let your baby finish one breast before switching to the other.**

Feeding at night may feel tiring, but it's **very important**. At night, your body makes more of the hormone prolactin, which helps with milk supply. Breastfeeding at night also helps babies feel safe and lowers the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). And believe it or not, many breastfeeding mothers actually get better sleep — because they respond to baby's needs quickly and gently.



YOUR MILK IS SMART. IT CHANGES TO MEET YOUR
BABY'S NEEDS — DAY AND NIGHT.

Is My Baby Getting Enough Milk?

Many parents ask this question — and the good news is, **your baby gives you clues.**

Most newborns feed 8 to 12 times in 24 hours, with each feeding lasting 15 to 30 minutes. **After a good feed, your baby will look calm, satisfied, and often fall asleep.**

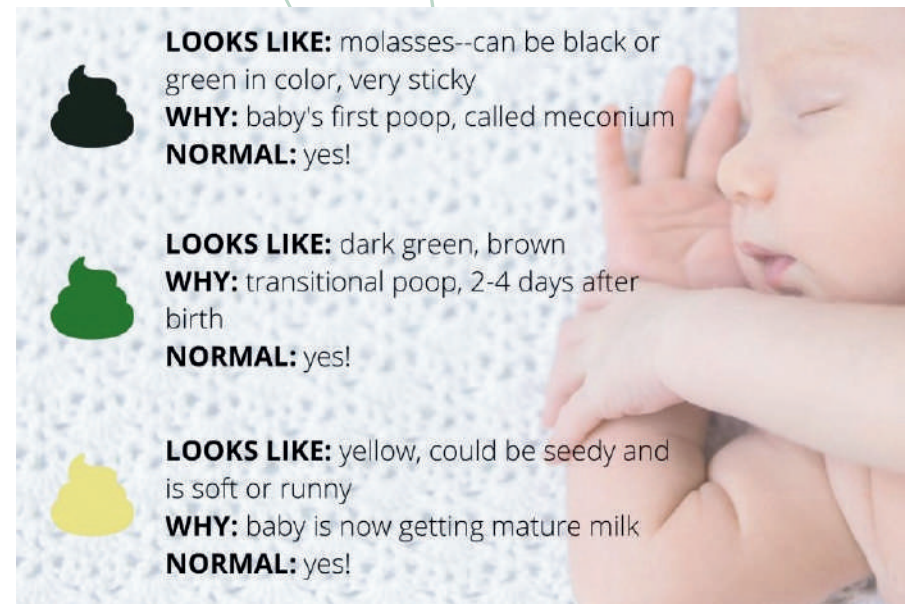
Watch your baby's diapers:

Urine: In the first 2 days, expect 2–3 wet diapers (sometimes dark orange). From day 3, 6–8 pale wet diapers daily.

Stool: First days are black and sticky. Then it turns greenish, and from day 5, at least 4 yellow, loose, seedy stools each day.

You'll also notice your breasts feel full before a feed and soft after. Your baby should gain weight steadily over time.

If your baby feeds too long (over 40 minutes), too short (under 10 minutes), or too often (more than 12 times/day), it might mean they are not latched well. **Ask for help if you're unsure.**



REMEMBER: EVERY FEED IS A TEAM EFFORT BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR BABY
— AND SUPPORT IS ALWAYS HERE WHEN YOU NEED IT.

Am I Making Enough Milk? Trust Your Body

Many parents worry: “Is my baby getting enough milk?” But the truth is, your body is designed to work with your baby — it’s all about **supply and demand**.

The more your baby feeds, the more milk your body will make.

In the first few days, babies often feed very often — sometimes every hour. This is called **cluster feeding**, and it’s completely normal. It helps your body understand how much milk to produce.

Some weight loss is also normal in the first few days — up to 7–10% of your baby’s birth weight. What matters is that your baby starts to gain again after that.

Watch for signs like **regular wet and dirty diapers**, and a **content baby who sleeps after feeding**, your breasts feel softer. These are all good signs that your milk is enough.

If you’re unsure, ask your healthcare team. They are there to support you



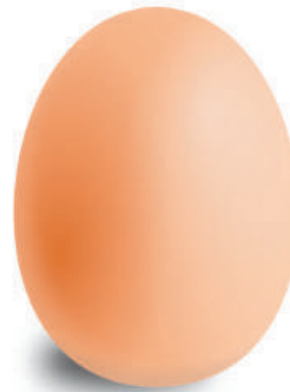
Day 1
5–7 ml



Day 3
22–27 ml



Day 7
45–60 ml



Day 30
80–150 ml

YOUR BODY IS LEARNING.
SO IS YOUR BABY. YOU'RE
DOING JUST FINE.

Staying Together - The Power of Rooming-In

From the moment your baby is born, staying close matters.

Rooming-in means your baby stays with you in the same room, day and night — *not in a nursery*.

This closeness helps you **learn your baby's signs** and respond to them quickly, especially when they are hungry. It makes responsive feeding easier and **builds your confidence**.

Being near each other also helps both of you **feel calm and safe**. Your baby hears your voice, feels your warmth, and begins to know you — and you get to know them too.

Rooming-in also **protects your baby** by reducing the risk of infection and encouraging strong bonding between you.



ONE ROOM. TWO HEARTS. GROWING TOGETHER FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY.

Expressing Milk - Another Way to Feed with Love

Sometimes, you may need to give your baby your milk in a different way. This is where **hand expression** can help.

You can express milk to:

- Soften your breast when it feels too full, making it easier for your baby to latch
- Ease discomfort from engorgement
- **Offer a few drops to help your baby start feeding**
- Keep your milk flowing if your baby isn't feeding often
- Let your nipples rest if they are sore or cracked



Press



Compress



Release

In the early days, you may get just a **teaspoon** of colostrum — and that's okay. It's powerful!

It may take 5 to 10 minutes to express a few drops.

To build milk supply, try to express 6 times or more in 24 hours, for 15–20 minutes each time — **including once at night.**

If your baby needs to be fed without latching, **cup feeding** is a safe option. It allows your baby to taste and sip the milk using their tongue — and it **avoids confusion** with artificial nipples.

REMEMBER, EXPRESSING IS JUST ANOTHER WAY OF GIVING YOUR BABY THE BEST START.



Why We Avoid Bottles and Teats in the Early Days

It might seem easy to offer a bottle or pacifier, but it can affect how your baby learns to breastfeed. It takes about 4-6 weeks for your breastfeeding to be established.

Some babies get used to sucking on artificial teats and may start to **refuse the breast**. When babies take fewer feeds from the breast, your milk supply may go down — and your baby may not get enough.



Also, bottles, teats, and pacifiers can carry germs if not **cleaned properly**. Over time, they may increase the risk of **ear infections**, tooth decay, and other dental issues.

To give your baby the best start, try to **avoid bottles and pacifiers** in the early weeks — especially while breastfeeding is being established.



Should it be a medical reason or your choice to use breastmilk substitutes, **don't worry**, we will educate and support you after birth in safe preparation, storage and use of breastmilk substitutes.

BREASTFEEDING IS NATURAL, BUT IT'S
ALSO A LEARNING PROCESS. YOUR BABY
NEEDS TIME, AND SO DO YOU.

Why Breast Milk Matters More Than You Think

Breast milk is made just for your baby — it's **full of live cells, antibodies, and nutrients** that protect and grow your baby in ways formula cannot.



When babies are fed formula instead of breast milk, studies show they are more likely to get sick. They have a higher risk of:

- Diarrhea
- Ear infections
- Lung problems like pneumonia and asthma
- Long-term health issues like diabetes and obesity
- Some types of childhood cancer
- And even SIDS — sudden infant death syndrome

This doesn't mean formula is unsafe — sometimes it's needed. But when breastfeeding is possible, it's the best protection you can give.

EVERY DROP OF YOUR MILK IS A STEP TOWARD A HEALTHIER FUTURE FOR YOUR BABY.



REMEMBER: YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING TRULY POWERFUL. THERE IS NO PERFECT WAY – ONLY YOUR WAY, SUPPORTED WITH CARE, KNOWLEDGE, AND LOVE.

EVERY BABY AND EVERY PARENT IS DIFFERENT. TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS, TAKE ONE DAY AT A TIME, AND DON'T HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING OR YOUR BABY'S HEALTH, PLEASE SPEAK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OR LACTATION CONSULTANT. THEY ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.

THIS STORYBOOK IS BASED ON TRUSTED, EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDANCE FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), UNICEF, AND THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS (AAP).

WE HOPE IT WILL HELP YOU FEEL MORE CONFIDENT, MORE INFORMED, AND MORE CONNECTED.

THE BABY FRIENDLY HOSPITAL INITIATIVE TASKFORCE
FAKEEH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
DUBAI - UAE
2025



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