

# 8 tips to help with breastfeeding problems

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1. Begin breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth. Most babies are alert and eager to feed within an hour or so of being born, and early skin-to-skin contact is great for bonding. Let your birth team know that you plan to breastfeed so they can assist you after the birth. Besides helping both of you adjust to breastfeeding, frequent feeding in the early days helps your milk to come in faster. Feeding regularly, and at the first signs your baby is hungry, will help prevent the build-up of milk in your breasts.
2. Ask for help and support Ask for help from your doctor, midwife, nurse or lactation consultant – even during your hospital stay - to make sure your baby is latching on and feeding correctly. Women who ask for help and/or have support and encouragement from family and friends to breastfeed will usually be more successful.
3. Feed on demand Feed as often, and for as long, as your baby wants, both day and night. This may be every 1 to 3 hours at first. Leaving long gaps between feedings may lead to a build-up of milk in your breast. See our tips for the first days of breastfeeding.
4. Don't cut it short Let your baby completely empty one breast before switching to the other if they're still hungry. Your baby will release your nipple when they have had enough. When you feed next, start with your other breast (one trick is to use a rubber band on your wrist to remind you which side to feed your baby on next!).
5. A healthy mom. A healthy baby. To support successful breastfeeding, it's important to ensure that you are getting healthy nutrition, adequate hydration, and good rest. Eat regularly, including plenty of fresh foods and vegetables. Experts recommend continuing to take your prenatal multivitamin for nutritional support for as long as breastfeeding continues. Learn more about a healthy diet for nursing mothers.
6. Try to relax while breastfeeding It can be a great time to get to know your little one. Touching and stroking their skin is calming for them and a great way to bond. Slowing down is great for you as well.
7. Avoid pressure on your breasts Excess pressure on your breasts may slow or stop milk flow and lead to plugged ducts. Things like sleeping on one side or your stomach, carrying a heavy purse or baby sling on one side, or wearing an underwired, ill-fitting, or too-tight bra can all be associated with plugged ducts.
8. Look out for early warning signs Check your breasts regularly for any early signs of mastitis, such as sore or damaged nipples, very heavy, swollen breasts, or lumps that could mean a blocked duct. If you have any of these symptoms, try to get as much rest as possible, continue to breastfeed regularly from the affected breast, and gently massage any lumps. Warm compresses applied to the tender area may also help. Speak to your healthcare provider if you are feeling ill or symptoms are not gone by the next day.