

Your important health information

When baby does not attach at the breast

Sometimes a newborn baby may not attach to the breast straightaway.

Many babies can take a few days or more to start breastfeeding well.

You can give your expressed breastmilk (EBM) until your baby is ready to breastfeed.

How will I give my breastmilk?

You can use a cup, spoon or finger feeding to give small amounts of your breastmilk.

Your midwife can help you with this.

While you are in hospital

- Placing your baby skin-to-skin on your bare chest can help baby find the breast and help your milk to flow: take off all of baby's clothes except for the nappy.
- You can offer baby your breast but do not worry if baby does not attach.
- Feed your baby at least 8 times in 24 hours (about every three hours).
- Express your breasts at least 8 times in 24 hours – this tells your body to start making milk:
 - first start expressing your breasts by hand and if your baby keeps having trouble attaching you can also use an electric pump– your midwife will teach you how to express, by hand and by pump
 - express for up to 30 minutes even if there is not much milk flow
 - swap back and forth between breasts at least twice
 - expressing your breasts often, can prevent them from getting too full and sore when your milk comes in.

Remember: more milk out = more milk made

See the *Expressing breastmilk* patient handout for more tips on expressing.

How much milk does my baby need?

Healthy babies do not need big amounts of milk in the first two to three days:

- the first 48 hours – start with the small amount of colostrum (the first or early milk) you can express
- 48-72 hours – your breasts will start to make more milk
 - your midwife will guide you on how much milk to give your baby
- give more breastmilk if your baby wants.

When you are at home

- Your baby may still not be breastfeeding by the time you leave hospital.
- Continue with what you were doing in hospital by expressing your breastmilk and feeding your baby.
- Give larger amounts of breastmilk each day as your baby grows.
- You can hire a hospital grade breast pump or buy a personal pump to express your milk. There are many different types. Ask your midwife for more details and advice.
- You can book an appointment at the Breastfeeding Support Service if you need further help after you leave hospital (see phone numbers below).

Bottle feeding your breastfed baby

A bottle and slow flow teat may be useful to give larger amounts of milk.

A long and thin teat will sit deeper in your baby's mouth.



When feeding baby by bottle:

- hold baby in close to you
- sit baby up with head slightly tilted back
- touch baby's lips with the teat
- wait for a wide open mouth before placing the teat into baby's mouth
- baby should have nearly all the teat in the mouth
- baby may want to rest a few times during the feed, there is usually no need to rush the feed, let baby set the pace.

Useful websites and apps

- Australian Breastfeeding Association
 - breastfeeding.asn.au
 - Mum2mum app
- Raising Children Network
 - raisingchildren.net.au

Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

Mercy Hospital for Women

Breastfeeding Support Service
Phone: 03 8458 4677

Werribee Mercy Hospital

Breastfeeding Support Service
Phone: 03 8754 3407

Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline
Phone: 1 800 686 268

Maternal & Child Health Line
Phone: 13 22 29

Private Lactation Consultants
lcanz.org

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