



PREPARING FOR YOUR BABY



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BABY'S FIRST FEED

THE FIRST 2-3 MONTHS

Babies are capable of using their reflexes to get to the breast. It is incredible to watch! (You can start watching at 7 min if you want it shorter.)

Any time during the first ten weeks, you can give your baby uninterrupted skin-to-skin time, and give it a try.



LAID-BACK POSITIONING

You can use the laid-back breastfeeding position, where you lie back in a comfortable semi-reclined position on a comfy sofa or bed. If you have had a caesarean section, your baby can lie across you and away from your incision – more horizontal than vertical. This position helps get a deep latch, can help make feeds more efficient and can massively help reduce pain.



This short video shows the laid-back position in action.





DEALING WITH PAIN

NO MATTER in which position you're feeding, focus on Tummy to tummy and Nose to Nipple.



It's great to try the laid back feeding position, which will help to fix 95% of the reasons why people experience pain!

If your baby needs some extra assistance to latch, you can try to push on top of your nipple to flip it upwards. This allows for a deeper latch and more efficient, effective feed.

If everyone is telling you that the latch looks great, but you are in agony, it's time to get some specialist help from an IBCLC. If you have any nipple injuries, blisters or bleeding, something is wrong and we can help!

If you get offered a nipple shield to help with the pain, know that the cause of the pain has not been addressed. The only time I suggest a nipple shield is if a baby is unable to latch onto the breast – that's it!

THE INTERVAL OBSESSION

Watch the baby, not the clock!

There is a lot of evidence of the many benefits that come from feeding your baby on demand, particularly in the first six weeks, as your milk supply establishes itself.

The only point where you DO need to watch the clock is during the first two weeks with a very sleepy bubba. Here, you need to ensure that you are feeding or pumping a **minimum** of every **3 hours (8-12x day)** in order to establish a full supply.

Know that most babies regularly go between **2-2.5hr** between feeds, with occasional longer stretches, though it is common for them to feed every 1-1.5h in the evenings . For your breast health and milk supply, don't go longer than **5 hours** without removing milk from your breasts during the first six weeks.

Expectation



Reality



SLEEPY NEWBORNS

TRY SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT

This can help ignite your baby's natural feeding instinct and encourage them to feed, especially if you're doing a laid-back feed. Skin-to-skin contact also allows you to notice subtle feeding cues that otherwise may be missed. Your baby may only make a slight wiggle to signal to you that they are ready to feed.



SWITCH SIDES

Your breasts work simultaneously, so, when you are feeding on one breast, the other side is also experiencing a letdown. Once your baby begins to fall asleep, switch sides so that there is a fresh supply waiting for them. You can repeat this several times (switch back and forth between breasts) because you have more than one letdown per feed. After the first 2 weeks, it's great to just follow your baby's lead, but this switch feeding is great to keep them from continually falling asleep!



SLEEPY NEWBORNS

USE GENTLE STIMULATION

If your baby falls asleep and stops feeding, give them a gentle full-body massage to stimulate them in a nurturing way. This involves starting gently at the eyebrow, moving softly across the head, then more firmly down the back to their toes. And repeat. Sitting your baby up and giving them a gentle back rub can also help to wake them up and it gives them the opportunity to burp if they need to (not all babies need to!). If that fails, changing your baby's nappy mid feed can rouse them enough to feed some more.



SUPPLEMENTATION

All babies lose weight after birth, and this is normal.



Once your baby loses 10% of their weight, only then should you consider supplementation, and only with the clear advice and support of an IBCLC.

Remember to look at more than just the chart when it comes to your baby's weight loss.



SUPPLEMENTATION

If your baby needs extra milk and you want to protect your breastfeeding, consider other options besides a bottle.

CUP FEEDING A NEWBORN



FINGER FEEDING A NEWBORN



AT-BREAST SUPPLEMENTATION



COLOSTRUM HARVESTING

You can consider collecting some of your colostrum from when you reach 36 weeks of your pregnancy.

Use the hand expression process detailed below to help you collect your colostrum. This process should not be uncomfortable: always apply gentle pressure. Most people can safely express colostrum by hand for 3–5 minutes, 1–3 times a day. Don't be surprised if colostrum only comes out slowly, one drop at a time! Expressing colostrum before birth can feel tedious, and it can take a few sessions to fill a 1ml syringe.



When you've finished collecting, draw up what you've collected in a sterile 1ml, 3ml, or 5ml syringe. If you plan to collect again in the same day, cap the syringe and place it in the back of your fridge. If you're done collecting for the day, cap the syringe, label the syringe with the date, and place it in the freezer. When you go to the hospital, bring your frozen colostrum with you and be sure to let your team know you plan to use it if needed!

Remember that if you try but can't collect any, it does not mean anything about your future ability to make milk!



COLOSTRUM HARVESTING

This video gives some great details from professionals who assist mothers in doing this.



A FEW LAST THINGS...

TRUSTWORTHY INFORMATION

There is an enormous variety of information online that can confuse anyone... Here are some great, evidence-based sites to help know what to expect in the first newborn weeks:

- You can trust this great website, '[Kellymom](#)', for brilliant, detailed, evidence-based information.
- If you ever want information about medications and breastfeeding, you can check your medication's compatibility [here](#). Know that almost all medications are absolutely fine for breastfeeding!
- There's a great [timeline for expected breastfeeding behaviour](#) [here](#).
- Feel free to join my Facebook group 'Breastfeeding Mamas in Switzerland' for accurate, supportive information and care, along with a beautiful community of people!



A FEW LAST THINGS...

GROUPS

- **Angie**, an NCT perinatal educator runs wonderful 'Newborn Mums' groups in Zurich; her 'Bonding with Baby' classes use gentle sensory activities to help support the attachment process for young babies, while helping mamas find their village. She also hosts a 'Baby Café', which provides infant feeding and sleep support.
- **Francesca** is a perinatal psychologist and sleep scientist who runs the New Mums' Circle, a warm and supportive group focusing more on the emotional aspects of having a new baby.
- **Janet** runs a mums-and-bubs group in Zug. You can contact her via her website at www.princenewlife.ch



A FEW LAST THINGS...

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Haplocare is a great resource for mental health support during and after pregnancy, and the creators have also developed an English-speaking, Switzerland-based app.

Francesca Baracchi, who runs the New Mum's Circle above, is a wonderful contact to have for individualised counselling support during this time also.

PARTNER SUPPORT

Here is a helpful article about ways that partners can provide support.

And if you want my personal article about my own experiences and thoughts, after my own tricky breastfeeding journeys, feel free to read here.



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