

# Breastfeeding Quick Start Guide

Getting off to a good start with feeding your baby

## The First Hour

Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth helps:

- Regulate baby's temperature and heart rate
- Stimulate breastfeeding instincts
- Calm both you and baby

Babies are often alert and ready to feed in the first hour—this is a great time for the first latch!

## Signs of a Good Latch

- Baby's mouth is open wide (like a yawn)
- Lips flanged outward (like fish lips)
- Chin touching breast, nose free or just barely touching
- You can see/hear swallowing
- Comfortable after initial latch (slight pinch is normal)

## Common Early Challenges

### Nipple Soreness

Some tenderness is normal in the first week. If pain continues throughout feeding or nipples are cracked/bleeding, get help with latch.

### Engorgement

Breasts become very full around days 3-5. Frequent feeding, warm compresses before feeding, and cold compresses after can help.

### Cluster Feeding

Baby wants to feed constantly, especially in evenings. This is normal and helps establish your supply!



## Is Baby Getting Enough?

### Output Signs:

- Day 1: 1-2 wet diapers, 1-2 dark stools
- Day 2: 2-3 wet diapers, 1-2 dark stools
- Day 3: 3-4 wet diapers, stools transitioning
- Day 4+: 6+ wet diapers, 3-4+ yellow, seedy stools

### Feeding Behavior:

- Baby seems satisfied after feeding
- Active sucking with swallowing
- Waking on own to feed (not always sleeping)
- Gaining weight (after initial loss of up to 7-10%)

## When to Seek Help

- Baby isn't latching or won't stay latched
- Painful breastfeeding that doesn't improve
- Cracked or bleeding nipples
- Baby not making enough wet/dirty diapers
- Baby losing more than 10% birth weight
- Baby still jaundiced after 2 weeks
- Signs of mastitis (fever, red/hot area on breast)

Early intervention makes a big difference! If you're struggling, don't wait—contact a lactation consultant. As a certified lactation counselor, I can help with many common issues.

## Helpful Positions

### Cradle Hold

Classic position with baby across your lap, head in crook of arm

### Cross-Cradle

Opposite hand supports baby's head—great for getting a good latch

### Football/Clutch

Baby tucked at your side—good for c-section recovery

### Side-Lying

Both you and baby lying down—great for night feeds

