



Feeding Twins on a Schedule

Here is the golden rule for feeding twins: when one wakes up to eat, both must wake up to eat. Your heart may break to wake up a sleeping baby, especially when she looks so cute and precious lying there sleeping, but remember that you will not have enough hours in a day to feed one after the other is fed, day in and day out. Once the babies are awake to eat, feed them at the same time, with burp breaks throughout and a good burping session at the end. If you have a helping hand to feed one twin while you feed the other, great. But if you are breastfeeding, or ever plan on being alone with your twins, you'll need to teach yourself how to feed both babies simultaneously. You might as well start learning now!



The best way to feed both twins simultaneously is with a large twin-feeding pillow, which works for nursing and bottlefeeding. It is a large U-shaped pillow with a firm foam core that fits around your waist and an opening at the back. Most versions have a safety belt to latch in place so that the pillow remains snug to your body. Each twin gets his or her own side and feeds in the football hold position. You will likely need help positioning the babies on the pillow in the early days but you will learn how to position them by yourself with time. You will soon be very capable, handling both babies safely simultaneously. If you've had a cesarean delivery, you may need to wait a week or so before starting to use a twin-feeding pillow because the pillow's front edge crosses your healing abdomen. In the postoperative period, use bed pillows propped on both sides to nurse your twins in a double football hold position. An alternative breastfeeding position has one baby in the traditional cradle hold and one baby in the football hold.

Positioning standard bed pillows or throw pillows for each feeding is a nuisance in the long run to get the right fit each time for frequent newborn feedings. It is critical that you position yourself and the twins properly for feedings, whether breastfeeding or bottle-feeding, to prevent backaches from poor posture. Hunching over for 20 minutes at a time, 8 to 12 times a day, can really take its toll on your body!

When your twins wake up to eat, look at the clock and make a mental note of the time. Newborns often can only tolerate being awake for an hour or an hour and a half at a stretch, 2 hours tops. The fact that they can only be awake roughly 90 minutes at a time can help you adjust your twins to live on the same schedule. How is the time awake spent? Feeding and burping will take quite some time (especially as mom and dad work on positioning the babies correctly). After feeding and burping, the twins should get some time upright to help them digest their milk; this is a nice time to interact and play with them. Bouncy chairs are helpful to keep one baby upright, safely buckled in, while you cuddle or burp the other twin.

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