

Breastfeeding Questions & Answers

Q. How often should a newborn be nursed?

A. You should nurse a newborn no less than 8 times a day, depending upon how long he sleeps between feedings at night. If he can go four hours between feedings, then you will probably feed him twice between 11pm and 7am. If you feed him right before he goes to bed, then you may only have to get up one time during the night.

Q. How often should an older baby be nursed?

A. Depending upon the age of your child, you should be feeding him every 3-4 hours during the day. As your child gets older, they will nurse less, but they will be eating more during each nursing. If you are going to nurse after your child is over 6 months old, you should not nurse less than 5 times a day. If your milk supply is decreasing, then you may need to add a nursing or two to your day to help increase your milk supply.

Q. How do I go about dropping a feeding as my baby gets older?

A. The most common change that moms need to make is going from a every 3 hour to every 4 hour routine, dropping a feeding in the middle of the night, or dropping a late-night feeding.

Most of the time you will know when your baby is ready to change their eating habits by a change in their sleep patterns. A baby that has been on an every 3 hour routine normally takes 3 naps a day and if they eat every 3,5 to 4 hours then they may drop the last nap or shorten one of the other naps considerably. Babies are usually ready to do this at around 3 months of age.

Most babies drop the feeding in the middle of night by themselves at around 6-14 weeks old. You will know that they are ready when you awake in a panic in the morning wondering why your baby did not get you for a feeding. The baby will require more food during the day though, and if you are breastfeeding, your breasts may feel full for a few days, but it is well worth it!

The late night feeding is usually the hardest to let go of. Some parents think that if they do not feed the baby right before bed that the baby will awake in the middle of the night. If you don't think your child can do without the late night feeding, then push it back in 15-minute increments until you are feeding

him at the time you would like to. If the last two feedings of the day seem too close together, don't worry. It will all work itself out and you both will be much happier for it!