

First Steps Towards Lifelong Healthy Life



SAN YSIDRO
HEALTH CENTER



Healthy and
Nutritious Food
from the Start
Can help promote
a lifetime of
healthy eating!



Breastmilk Is
Best Start in Life!



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Feeding your little one in a healthy way from the start not only promotes normal growth, but lays the foundation for healthy growth and healthy eating habits for lifetime.

Breastfeeding provides a natural defense against allergies and infections. Breastmilk contains a unique mix of fatty acids, lactose, amino acids, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and other important “factors” that combine to make the perfect infant food. It has everything a baby needs for easy digestion, brain development, healthy growth, and protection from illness.



For the first six months of life, your baby needs only breast milk.

During your baby's first year of life, he/she will more than triple his/her total body weight, and the majority of this weight gain, will come from the milk that they drink. Breastmilk contains fats needed for optimal brain development and may reduce the risk of obesity, also exposes your baby to a variety of flavors from the foods you eat, since these flavors are transferred in your breastmilk. This not only teaches your baby early on about the foods your family enjoys, but also helps increase the likelihood that he will accept new foods when he starts eating pureed foods.



Breast milk would appear to be the most ideal food for your newborn.

Breast milk is the food least likely to cause allergic reactions, it is inexpensive, it is readily available at any hour of the day or night; babies accept the taste readily; and the immunity factors in breast milk can help the baby fight off some infections.



When can breastfeeding begin?

Breastfeeding can begin from the first time you hold your newborn in the delivery room within minutes after birth. The first milk the mother produces, called colostrum, is the best food for a newborn and rich in nutrients and antibodies. In those first few days it is extremely important to breastfeed your newborn at least 8-12 times each 24 hours, and more often is even better. This allows your baby to get all the benefits of the colostrum and also stimulates production of a plentiful supply of mature milk. Frequent breastfeeding helps the uterus contract and can help stop uterine bleeding also helps prevent engorgement.

During the first few days of nursing your newborn, you'll want to make sure he's establishing a solid latch, which is essential for successful breastfeeding. To make sure your baby latches on to your breast properly, hold your breast with your free hand and gently touch your baby's lips with your nipple. When the baby opens the mouth, center your nipple in baby's mouth, and bring your baby closer to you.

The more you nurse, the more quickly your mature milk will come in and the more milk you'll produce. Nursing for ten to 15 minutes per breast eight to 12 times every 24 hours is pretty much on target.



Breastfeeding is good for the mother too.

The baby's sucking releases hormones that contract the uterus, helping it to return to its normal size more quickly. Women who breastfeed lose weight more quickly after birth. Breastfeeding provides contact between mother and baby that builds their relationship. It is very economical compared to the costs of buying formula. Also, women who breastfeed have a lower chance of getting breast and ovarian cancers and of developing osteoporosis.

Before your baby is born, learn as much about breastfeeding as possible.

Ask for the classes available at your hospital or the WIC program, and ask for reading material from your physician during your prenatal care. The more information you have about nursing before you begin, the more confident you'll feel about it once you start. Remember that confidence, comfort, and relaxation are three keys to successful breastfeeding. Simply put: the more confident and comfortable you are, the more relaxed you are, the easier it is for you to produce milk.



How do I know if my baby is getting enough to eat?

Keep track of your baby's wet and poopy diapers. If your baby has 4-6 wet diapers and 3-4 poopy diapers in 24 hours that usually means they are getting enough milk. Talk to your baby's pediatrician at your office visits about your baby's growth chart if you are concerned or curious. It is important to remember that as babies get a little older the number of bowel movements per day may decrease. Some breastfed babies after about 2 months of age have only one bowel movement per week.

When should one seek medical care for problems with breastfeeding?

It is important to call your health-care provider if you develop serious symptoms such as fever or signs of mastitis (a breast inflammation that may be caused by an infection). Symptoms of mastitis include increasing pain in the breast, fever, chills, sweats, breast swelling and/or hardness, and redness of the skin over the affected area. A delay in treating mastitis could lead to a more severe infection and possible breast abscess.

Should certain foods be avoided while breastfeeding?



A normal healthy diet is all you need while you're nursing. Experts used to recommend that nursing moms get an extra 400 to 500 calories a day, but new research shows that you don't need that calorie boost, says breastfeeding expert Kathleen Huggins, author of *The Nursing Mother's Companion*. You'll want to maintain a well-balanced diet for your own health, but you don't need to follow complicated dietary rules to successfully nurse your baby.

Some babies appear to be sensitive to certain foods in the mother's diet. Usually it takes about two to six hours for your body to digest and absorb the food you eat and pass it into your breast milk.

A baby may become fussy, may have trouble sleeping, or may develop gas after the mother eats certain types of foods with strong flavors. Some of the most common triggers of fussiness in babies include chocolate, citrus fruits, and gas-causing vegetables like cauliflower, cabbage, and broccoli. You may also need to limit caffeine, and avoid chocolate, spicy foods, and other irritants that get into breast milk and can bother your baby. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommend that nursing mothers should completely avoid eating shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish (also called golden or white snapper) because of potentially high levels of mercury.

Be sure to drink lots of fluids — the oxytocin released by your body while you breastfeed will make you thirsty and help remind you to drink.

How and when do I start my baby on solid foods?

Feeding your baby solid foods for the first time can certainly be an adventure, but by making informed decisions, you'll be ok. Classes are available too.

You may hear that solid food will help your baby sleep through the night, but this is a myth. Breast milk is far more nutritious than any solid you could give your baby.

Breast milk is the only food your newborn needs until is four to six months old, when will begin to develop the coordination to move solid foods from the front of the mouth to the back for swallowing. At the same time, your baby's head control will improve and he or she will learn to sit with support, which are the essential skills and the signs that he is ready to start eating solid foods. Your baby's health care provider and your WIC counselor can talk to you more about the signs of readiness in your baby.

Your beautiful baby is a few months old now, and he seems hungry even with eight to ten feedings of breast milk or formula a day, or start showing a great deal of interest in the food of the adults and older children around, so you're beginning to think that you may want to give him solid foods. But you're not quite sure when and what you should feed your little darling.

Questions? Call the San Ysidro Health Center
 **WIC Program at (619) 426-7966.**

