

Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding is the best way to feed your baby, there is no doubt about that. The scientific evidence keeps mounting that breast milk is superior to all other forms of infant feeding. WHO recommends that baby be fed AT LEAST 6 months and ON DEMAND (as long as baby wishes). Below are some reasons that support this, as well as some guidelines on how and how long to breastfeed.

Benefits of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding benefits for babies

1. Breastfeeding provides your baby all the nutrition, growth factors, and disease protection needed for healthy growth and lifelong disease protection. Formula provides no disease protection...
2. Breastfeeding reduces the risks of allergies and diabetes.
3. Breastfed infants have less incidence of ear infections, diarrhea, respiratory illness, gastrointestinal illness, cancer, heart disease, obesity, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
4. Breastfeeding is comforting.
5. Babies who are breastfed have higher intelligence scores.

Breastfeeding benefits for mothers:

1. Breastfeeding decreases the risks of breast and ovarian cancer,

diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and depression in women who breastfeed.

2. Women who breastfeed return to pre-pregnant weight more quickly.
3. Breastfeeding reduces postpartum bleeding.
4. Breastfeeding decreases stress hormones in you and your baby.
5. Breastfeeding saves you time and money!

Breastfeeding: The first few days

Immediately after birth - the first 3 days after birth:

Evidence shows that newborns who are placed skin-to-skin with their mothers immediately after birth make a good transition from fetal to newborn life with greater respiratory, temperature, and glucose stability and significantly less crying indicating decreased stress. Most importantly, skin-to-skin promotes bonding and helps breastfeeding get started.

After this wakeful period, babies typically sleep a lot for the rest of their first day. During the next 2 days, babies tend to wake up and spend a lot of time at the breast, getting nourishment and building your milk supply.

Babies can get over-stimulated from all the sights, sounds, and activities of their new world. Being held close and at the breast helps calm and soothe your baby.

Colostrum and babies' extra fluid stores:

Colostrum is concentrated milk that your breasts produce from about the middle of pregnancy. It gives your baby protection against disease. The amount of colostrum is small during the first few days so the baby's small stomach will not be overfilled.

The more the baby sucks every day, the larger his/her stomach will grow. Eventually, colostrum becomes transitional milk, and then normal milk, which comes in abundance after a few days.

The first 6 months: Exclusive Breastfeeding

Breast milk is all your baby needs for the first 6 months of life:

Babies need no other food or fluid, including water.

If introduced before the 6th month, food or fluids can cause problems for breastfeeding and the baby's health.

Your baby's body has iron stores that were obtained from your body during pregnancy. Your breast milk has a protein that enables your baby's body to use these iron stores. Breast milk gives the baby body-building components particularly suited for his health and development.

After 6 months:

After 6 months, the baby can sit up to swallow food properly, his/her tongue and mouth cavity can accept food, and his/her body can produce the protein that fights off disease.

You can keep on breastfeeding up to 2 years of age and more. If unable to do that, you can stop immediately or gradually.

But remember, the longer you breastfeed, the greater the benefits!

Breastfeeding: Latch and Positioning

Tips to help your baby latch onto your breast:

- You should sit like a "Queen", with comfortable armrests (or pillows) and legs resting a bit up to avoid leaning forward and having backaches.
- Bring baby up to the level of your breast by putting a pillow under the baby.
- Place baby's head (and neck) on your forearm.
- Use your hand to direct the areola well onto baby's mouth.
- Baby should latch the whole are-

ola, not just the nipple. If you feel discomfort during nursing, baby may not have enough breast in his/her mouth. Insert your finger between his/her jaws to break suction then re-latch.

Information You Need To Know:

- Feeding signs/cues that show that baby is hungry: smacking of the lips, opening the mouth, sucking on lips/ tongue/ hands/ fingers/ or clothing, trying to position for nursing, fussing and fidgeting around.
- Baby learns the tastes of the family foods through the flavors of breast milk, hence eating all you wish will help baby get accustomed to the different flavors of the family foods.
- Jaundice occurs in 70-50% of all newborns. In most cases, jaundice is a normal process that can be managed without interrupting breastfeeding. Talk to your pediatrician to check the correct way to deal with jaundice, as there are different types, some which don't require any treatment.
- In case you have a disease, talk to your physician to determine whether your medical condition warrants you to interrupt or stop breastfeeding. However, there are few diseases during which human milk is not recommended.

Breastfeeding Support

Breastfeeding can be difficult at times, and you will need some support from your surrounding (spouse, mother, friends and workplace colleagues) to be able to go through it. Our professional midwives or breastfeeding consultants are available 24/7 to assist you on-site or via our helpline any moment you encounter questions or difficulties regarding breastfeeding.

Alternatively, we can also recommend external professional support/advice or breastfeeding support groups if you need them.

Golden Rules for Successful Breastfeeding

- Breastfeed on demand as long as (s)he wishes.
- Do not give baby artificial teats, bottle, or pacifier during first weeks.
- Practice exclusive breastfeeding.
- Hand expression during the feed can help the baby to express more quantity of colostrum.
- A breastfeeding session duration can differ from one time to another. It can take from 15 minutes at least to 40 minutes or even more the first few weeks. The baby will then establish his/her own pattern.

We wish you good luck in your breastfeeding journey!

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to call us at:

MATERNITY DEPARTMENT

Bellevue Medical Center
Mansourieh El Metn- Lebanon
P.O. BOX 295
Tel 01-698334 (direct line)
Or 01-682666 – ext. 2400
Email: info@bmc.com.lb
Website: www.bmc.com.lb