Breastfeeding 101

Helpful Hints

★ Offer both breasts with each feeding.

★ Alternate the breast that is offered 1st each time. (To remember, leave nursing bra strap unlatched for the one to start 1st)

★ Each child is different: Some babies need between 10-20 minutes each breast. Your baby will usually let you know when to switch.

★ The first few weeks, infants will need between 8-12 feedings a day or every 2-3 hours. As your baby grows, the interval may increase.

★ Keep baby awake for feeds by stroking along the cheek down to the chin or by gently rubbing the bottom of the feet.

★ If you experience engorgement (hard, painful areas) in your breasts, use a warm washcloth and massage your breast prior to feeding. Pumping milk for a few minutes before a feeding may also soften the breast and nipples for a better latch.

★ For tenderness – after feeding baby, place a cool compress (or a small zip bag of frozen peas) on breasts for a few minutes.

★ Apply lanolin ointment to breast after feeding to keep breasts from cracking. This will not harm your baby.

★ See your doctor if you have redness, warmth, or cracking on your breast or nipple.

How do I know if my baby has eaten enough?

★ Count the wet diapers/stools. If there are about 5-6 each day (or with several feeds a day), your baby is usually getting enough.

★ Ask your doctor about weight gain. This is a great way to find out if your baby is getting enough milk.

Growth Spurts

★ Many babies require more frequent feedings during these times: 8-12 days old, 3-4 weeks old and 3 months old. These can vary with each infant.

How can dad or family members help?

★ By bringing your baby to you and putting the baby down to sleep after each feeding.

★ Changing baby before and/or after feeds.

★ Helping to keep baby awake during feeds by stroking along cheek or gently rubbing the feet.

Breastfeeding Benefits

Breastfeeding is one of the most important ways you can contribute to your baby's health and nutrition.

You may be surprised, but both your baby AND you may significantly benefit.
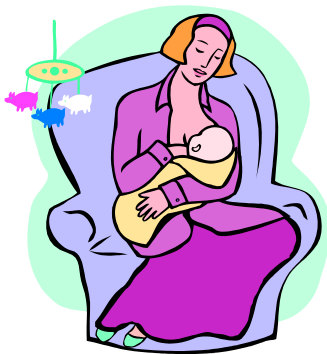
For your baby...

★ Fewer ear infections, colds and less diarrhea
★ Fewer sick visits
★ Increased bonding with mother
★ More easily digested (and faster!)
★ Can decrease risk for obesity
★ May decrease risk for allergies
★ May decrease risk for chronic illnesses
    such as asthma, diabetes and cancer

For you...

★ Increased bonding and self confidence
★ Less bleeding after birth
★ Faster weight loss after delivery
★ Decreased risk of ovarian and breast cancer
★ Less time away from work at sick visits
★ SAVE Money: IT'S FREE!!

Don't forget your - and your baby's - vitamins. Vitamin D deficiency is on the rise!

★ Stay on YOUR prenatal vitamins.
★ Breastfed babies need vitamin D (either D-Vi-Sol, Tri-Vi-Sol or Poly-Vi-Sol vitamins) while getting at least half of their feedings with breast milk. Offer 1 dropper once a day.
★ Iron can start at 4 months of age.

Going Back to Work?

Pumping is a wonderful way to continue breast feeding when you go back to work, but typically the pump is not as good as baby....

Here are a few tips:

★ Rent or buy an electric pump.

★ Find a private, sanitary place you can use at work.

★ Pump at least once a day for 1-2 weeks before going back to build up a little supply. You can freeze for up to 3 months.

★ Try to pump 1 extra time if possible than your baby's feeding schedule at that time to help keep your supply up. (You can do this by breastfeeding before you leave and pumping right away afterward.)

★ Place a picture of your baby in your pumping bag. This can help with let down of the milk and give you a glimpse of your baby!

Remember... breastfeeding can be challenging in some cases.
If this happens for you and your baby, talk with your doctor.
Babies ultimately need to grow and that still remains our goal
whether your baby gets breast milk or formula.
There is support available for you - don't be shy about asking!