

Your Prenatal Health Matters

Breastfeeding after a Caesarean



Congratulations on the birth of your new baby and your plan to feed your baby only breast milk!

Peel Public Health and Trillium Health Partners want to support you and your family as you learn to feed your baby and take care of yourself.

Did You Know?

FOR BABY:

- Giving only breast milk in the first 6 months of life helps your baby fight infections and develop a strong immune system
- Breastfed babies are less likely to become obese later in life

FOR MOTHER:

- If you believe you can breastfeed your baby you are more likely to continue
- Frequent breastfeeding and hand expression of breast milk in the early days contribute to a good milk supply
- Women have a lower risk of developing ovarian cancer when they breastfeed for at least 5 months in their lifetime
- Women have a lower risk of developing breast cancer when they breastfeed for at least 12 months in their lifetime

FOR FAMILY:

- Family support and encouragement helps a mother to breastfeed



Trillium
Health Partners
Better Together

Photo by Sandra Tavares

This resource is intended for families with healthy term babies born by caesarean.

It was designed to help families learn ways to deal with experiences commonly faced during the early days.





















Use it in addition to other breastfeeding resources given to you by your health care providers.

Feel comfortable asking questions and seeking assistance as you gain confidence in your new role.

If you have concerns about mother's or baby's health, get immediate assistance from a health care provider.

GUIDELINES FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

Breast milk is all the food a baby needs for the first six months
— At six months of age begin introducing solid foods
while continuing to breastfeed until age two or older.
(WHO, UNICEF, Canadian Pediatric Society)

Your Baby's Age	1 WEEK							2 WEEKS	3 WEEKS
	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	4 DAYS	5 DAYS	6 DAYS	7 DAYS		
How Often Should You Breastfeed? Per day, on average over 24 hours	        At least 8 feeds per day (every 1 to 3 hours). Your baby is sucking strongly, slowly, steadily and swallowing often.								
Your Baby's Tummy Size	 Size of a cherry		 Size of a walnut		 Size of an apricot		 Size of an egg		
Wet Diapers: How Many, How Wet Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 WET	 At least 2 WET	 At least 3 WET	 At least 4 WET	 At least 6 HEAVY WET WITH PALE YELLOW OR CLEAR URINE				
Soiled Diapers: Number and Colour of Stools Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 to 2 BLACK OR DARK GREEN		 At least 3 BROWN, GREEN, OR YELLOW		 At least 3 large, soft and seedy YELLOW				
Your Baby's Weight	Babies lose an average of 7% of their birth weight in the first 3 days after birth.				From Day 4 onward your baby should gain 20 to 35g per day (to 1½ oz) and regain his or her birth weight by 10 to 14 days. Following a caesarean birth, baby may not begin to gain weight until day 5.				
Other Signs	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily. Your breasts feel softer and less full after breastfeeding.								

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by/par health **nexus** santé

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Part 1 – Your Hospital Stay (from birth to discharge)

What I can expect:

I will hold my baby skin-to-skin soon after birth

What may happen:

Delayed or limited skin-to-skin contact because of surgery, health of baby or mother

Did you know?

Skin-to-skin contact:

- helps baby adjust to life outside the womb
- helps baby breathe normally
- keeps baby warm
- helps mother make breast milk by encouraging baby to feed often and well
- soothes and comforts baby and relaxes mother
- helps mother and baby get to know each other
- supports mother and baby to breastfeed longer



What mother can do:

Ask a nurse for help:

- to hold baby skin-to-skin as soon as possible after birth

Get to know baby:

- allow baby to smell, lick and touch your breast
- give baby to father/partner/support person to hold skin-to-skin when you are being moved to a stretcher or bed
- resume skin-to-skin with baby once you are settled
- hold baby skin-to-skin as much as possible throughout your hospital stay

What father/partner/support person can do:

Ask a nurse for help:

- to place baby skin-to-skin with mother as soon as possible after the birth
- to get a light blanket to cover mother and baby

Provide support to mother:

- stay with her and help her hold baby skin-to-skin
- hold baby skin-to-skin when mother is being transferred to bed or is resting
- stay and help mother and baby while they are in hospital

Get to know baby:

- take time to hold baby skin-to-skin
- enjoy spending this time with mother and baby

Part 1 – Your Hospital Stay (from birth to discharge)

What I can expect:

I will feed my baby **ONLY** breast milk (including baby's first milk, called colostrum)

What may happen:

I will worry I don't have enough milk to feed my baby

Did you know?

- Giving **ONLY** breast milk signals your breasts to produce the right amount of milk
- As more milk is removed (with feeding or hand expression), more breast milk is made
- Removing even a few drops of milk helps to build your milk supply
- Your baby needs small, frequent feedings in the first few days of life
- Your body is designed to feed your baby
- Research shows that babies who receive no food or drink other than breast milk, for six months, are less likely to get ear, chest and stomach infections



What mother can do:

Ask a nurse for help:

- at any time during your hospital stay
- to learn the early signs that baby is ready to eat: moving arms and legs, bringing hands to mouth, sucking, licking and opening mouth (crying is a late sign of hunger)
- with expressing breast milk and feeding it to baby
- in attending a breastfeeding class in hospital

Know that it is important to:

- breastfeed within 1-2 hours after birth
- breastfeed baby, with help, 8 or more times in 24 hours
- recognize the signs of a good latch on the breast
- watch and listen for baby swallowing during feeding
- keep baby skin-to-skin as much as possible

Understand that:

- your nipples may feel tender as you get used to breastfeeding baby
- one way to ensure that baby is getting enough breast milk is by keeping track of your baby's urine and stools (wet and dirty diapers)
- baby needs only small, frequent amounts of milk

What father/partner/support person can do:

Ask a nurse for help:

- to learn the signs that baby is ready to eat and bring baby to mother
- to recognize that baby is getting enough milk

Provide support to the mother:

- ask hospital staff to help mother and baby with breastfeeding within 1-2 hours after birth and as needed
- remind mother to be patient while learning to breastfeed
- assist and encourage mother to breastfeed even if family or friends are discouraging

Give practical help to mother:

- help mother to position and hold baby
- change diaper and bathe baby
- assist with hand expression of breast milk
- ensure mother has drinks and snacks available

Understand that:

- breastfeeding helps make the right amount of milk for baby
- giving baby anything other than breast milk can interfere with milk production

Part 1 – Your Hospital Stay (from birth to discharge)

What I can expect:

I will comfort my baby while he/she adjusts to life after birth

What may happen:

My baby may want to feed often, cry and have trouble settling

Did you know?

- After the first 24 hours, my baby may find it hard to adjust when not feeling the warmth, heart beat and security of being close to me
- Spending time skin-to-skin and feeding often provides a sense of calm for baby
- Building a healthy relationship is important for your baby's development



What mother can do:

Know that it is important to:

- continue to hold baby skin-to-skin
- let baby feed at the breast as often as baby wants
- sleep when your baby sleeps
- be patient with your new baby and yourself

Understand that:

- feeding every 1-2 hours is normal at this time and helps to build your milk supply
- spending as much time with your baby as possible develops confidence in responding to baby's needs
- focusing on one feeding at a time is more manageable

What father/partner/support person can do:

Provide support to the mother:

- maintain a calm and quiet environment to help mother rest and learn to breastfeed:
 - dim the lights
 - talk or sing to baby softly
 - limit visitors and passing baby around

Give practical help to mother:

- change the baby's diaper when needed
- hold baby when mother is resting

Part 1 – Your Hospital Stay (from birth to discharge)

What I can expect:

I will hold my baby comfortably during breastfeeding even though I have had surgery

What may happen:

I will have pain and discomfort after the surgery and moving around may be difficult
I may find it hard to get comfortable when holding and breastfeeding my baby

Did you know?

- There is pain medication that is safe to take while breastfeeding
- Relaxation methods may help you feel more comfortable
- Hormones released during breastfeeding help you to relax
- It is normal to have afterpains, a type of contraction, while breastfeeding
- It is important to get up, move around and do deep breathing exercises to reduce complications after surgery



What mother can do:

Ask a nurse for help:

- to position and hold baby to keep pressure off your incision (football hold)
- if you are feeling unwell, have pain discomfort
- if you have questions about medication or anything else
- to get up and move around

Know that it is important to:

- be in control of pain so you can be more comfortable, move around, hold, feed and enjoy your baby
- ask for pain medication when needed

Understand that:

- you have had major surgery
- it will take time for you to recover

What father/partner/support person can do:

Ask a nurse:

- for pain medication for mother

Provide support to the mother by:

- assisting mother with tasks such as dressing, washing, getting up and moving around
- being involved with baby's care
- knowing when she can have next pain medication

Remember that:

- an incision, intravenous, urinary catheter and fatigue are part of recovering from surgery

Be patient

Listen to mother

Remind mother she is not alone

This is a learning time for you and your family and new skills are being developed

Part 2 – Your First Few Weeks Home

What I can expect:

I will feed my baby **ONLY** breast milk

What may happen:

I will worry about keeping up with my baby's breastfeeding demands

I may have difficulty getting my baby to latch onto my breast

Did you know?

- Breast fullness occurs 3-6 days after baby is born and lasts for about 24 hours
- Infrequent feedings and intravenous fluids during surgery may result in the breasts becoming hard and enlarged, making it difficult for the baby to latch on
- Your baby will need to breastfeed more often when going through a growth spurt at about 2-3 weeks. Your breasts will make the right amount of milk for the baby
- Healthy breastfed babies need a daily dose of 400 IU of Vitamin D for the first year of life



What mother can do:

Know it is important to:

- ask family to bring baby to you to feed even if you are resting or sleeping
- remind your family about your wishes to give baby only breast milk
- continue breastfeeding skin-to-skin
- breastfeed when baby shows early feeding cues
- listen for baby's swallowing while feeding
- count baby's wet and dirty diapers

Understand that:

- babies need to breastfeed 8 or more times in 24 hours
- you may need to gently wake your baby to feed
- frequent feedings help to produce the right amount of milk
- your breasts will feel softer after breastfeeding
- you have a breastfeeding plan; with support and understanding, you can get through any challenges

You should get help if:

- baby is too sleepy to feed
- baby is not having enough wet/dirty diapers
- you have a hard time latching your baby on breast
- you have sore nipples
- you notice a red, tender, hot area on your breast

What father/partner/support person can do:

Know it is important to:

- bring baby to mother to breastfeed even when mother is resting/sleeping
- support mother's decision to breastfeed
- limit visitors who are unsupportive
- recognize when the baby is ready to breastfeed
- know the signs that baby is getting enough milk

Provide support to the mother by:

- doing or designating household tasks so mother can rest and breastfeed
- caring for baby

Remember to:

- maintain a calm and quiet environment
- change and count the number of wet and dirty diapers

What mother and support person can do:

If mother's breasts feel hard and latching is difficult, try the following before feeding to soften the breasts:

- cool compress to decrease swelling OR warm shower/compresses to help soften breast
- massage breast gently and hand express some milk

Part 2 – Your First Few Weeks Home

What I can expect:

I will cope with the adjustment of being home

What may happen:

I feel overwhelmed and tired with the adjustment of being home and caring for a new baby

Did you know?

- All new parents find the first few weeks challenging – physically and emotionally
- Parents often feel stress after bringing baby home. Caring for a new baby means not only less sleep, but also less time to spend with your partner
- Babies can begin to have fussy periods with crying that start around 2-3 weeks and may last until about 6 weeks of age
- Skin-to-skin helps to comfort you and your baby and promotes breastfeeding
- Comforting your baby teaches him/her you are there to meet his/her needs



What mother can do:

Know it is important to:

- rest when baby is sleeping; let the household tasks wait
- give yourself permission to take time throughout your day to rest
- enjoy holding, talking and singing to baby

Understand that:

- the first days home from the hospital are an important time of adjustment and you aren't expected to know everything
- you can successfully cope with breastfeeding like other challenging tasks
- there may be times you feel tired and frustrated, but **never shake your baby**

Ask:

- a family member or a friend that you trust to look after your baby if you feel you need a break
- to have baby brought to you to breastfeed when baby is ready to eat
- a Public Health Nurse, your midwife or contact your hospital breastfeeding clinic to answer your questions and help you gain the confidence to know you are meeting your baby's needs

What father/partner/support person can do:

Know it is important to:

- rest and eat healthy food
- take time to be together as a family
- be patient with each other as you adjust to your new roles
- decide what household tasks can wait

Remember to:

- accept offers for help
- ask a family member or a friend that you trust to look after your baby if you feel you need a break
- never shake your baby
- recognize that breastfeeding takes time
- continue to support mother's decision to feed baby only breast milk

Spending as much time with your baby as possible develops confidence in responding to baby's needs

Part 2 – Your First Few Weeks Home

What I can expect:

I will hold and feed my baby comfortably even though I have had surgery

What may happen:

I will have pain and discomfort after the surgery and moving around may be difficult
I may find it hard to get comfortable when holding and breastfeeding my baby

Did you know?

- It is important to follow your doctor's instructions once you go home including taking pain medication if it is needed
- It is easier to take care of your baby if you take steps to take care of yourself
- It can be helpful to have someone with you to assist you at home



What mother can do:

Know it is important to:

- continue to take pain medication as you need it
- take care of yourself

Remember:

- to follow your hospital discharge instructions
- as your body heals, you may want to try different breastfeeding positions
- it is okay to ask for help

Ask:

- your doctor, midwife or nurse if you have questions about medication

What father/partner/support person can do:

Remember to:

- be with mother and provide emotional and practical support
- be aware of any increase in the mother's pain level and encourage her to contact her health care provider as needed

Give practical help to mother:

- help mother try different breastfeeding positions that are comfortable for feeding baby

Part 2 – Your First Few Weeks Home

What I can expect:

I will know who I can contact for breastfeeding help
I know where to get information about breastfeeding

What may happen:

I have questions and I am not sure where to go for help

Did you know?

- Your birth hospital, midwife, Peel Public Health and Telehealth Ontario offer free breastfeeding help

Peel Public Health offers FREE:

- Breastfeeding help from a Public Health Nurse in person or by telephone
- Breastfeeding Companions – peer support
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children – in home support from a Public Health Nurse and Family Visitor about feeding, parenting, growth and development and community resources
- Telephone support from a Public Health Nurse about feeding, parenting, programs and resources
- Online parenting information and videos

ParentingInPeel.ca

905-799-7700 (in Caledon 905-584-2216)



Facebook.com/ParentinginPeel



Designated Baby-Friendly
Community Health Service since 2009

Other resources:

- Telehealth Ontario
speak to a nurse 24 hours/day
-for breastfeeding advice and support
- for health questions
1-866-797-0000
- Trillium Health Partners
trilliumhealthpartners.ca/patientservices/womens
- William Osler Health System
williamoslerhc.on.ca
- Your health care provider
- Motherisk
Web and telephone information on breastfeeding and medications, food products, and chemicals or substances that the breastfeeding mother may be exposed to
motherisk.org
416-813-6780
- Peel Postpartum Family Support Line
PmdInPeel.ca
905-459-8441 (in Caledon 289-298-5468)
- Call 911 for emergencies

Refer to the Community Resources in Peel handout for more information