

MYRTLE AVENUE Pediatrics



Greg Savel, MD
Karen Kelly, MD

Linda Ellis, ARNP

Kathryn Boreman, MD
Kimberly Odom, MD

FEEDING

SUCCESSFUL FEEDINGS IN NEWBORNS:

How can you tell whether your baby is getting enough breast milk or formula? The best gauge of good nourishment is growth. All babies, both breast and formula-fed, tend to lose up to 10% of their birth weight in the first three to four days following birth. Daily weights are checked in newborn nurseries to ensure that the weight loss is within normal parameters and not excessive. Measurements of weight, length, and head circumference will be taken at each checkup, which is one reason why regular checkups are so important. Other signs of adequate breast milk or formula intake are regular bowel movements and frequent wet diapers. Bowel movements range from 10–12 times each day to one time every three days, and are typically yellow, green, or brown in appearance. Call the office if there is no bowel movement for more than three days, especially during the first two to three weeks after birth.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best choice for your baby, unless maternal health or medication issues cause a conflict. Breast milk is the optimal choice for nutrition, raises I.Q., guards against infections, and provides long-term protection from diseases, including reducing the likelihood of diabetes, asthma, allergies, obesity, and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). However, breast-feeding is often challenging at first, and mothers typically struggle with helping newborns latch onto the breast or worry about an adequate milk supply. A small amount of initial fluid is expressed, called colostrum, which is extraordinarily nutritious. Colostrum is replaced by more plentiful breast milk four to six days after birth, following milk letdown.

613 S. Myrtle Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756
T: 727-447-6458

250 Pine Avenue N
Oldsmar, FL 34677
F: 727-461-5211 Extended Hours line: 727-461-5906

We recommend nursing from both breasts at each feeding. Ideally, try to have 8–12 feedings per 24 hours one to two weeks after birth, or approximately every two to three hours. **Do not be discouraged if this seems difficult at first.** We will support you and help with any problems that may arise. In addition, the nurses in maternity wards may offer guidance with breast-feeding technique. Lactation consultants (breast-feeding specialists) are also available if needed. During the first two weeks, breastfeed exclusively in order to establish a good feeding pattern, an ample milk supply, and make both you and the baby comfortable. After two weeks, we suggest giving your infant one bottle a day of expressed breast milk. This may be the appropriate time for dad to help with feeding while the baby gets accustomed to a bottle, as well as allow flexibility for breastfeeding moms who would like to use a babysitter or daycare.

Expressed milk can be stored for up to five days in a refrigerator and up to three months in a freezer. Frozen milk should be thawed in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours. **Do not use microwaves for defrosting or warming milk.** Discard room temperature expressed milk after four to six hours.

Since breast milk typically lacks sufficient vitamin D, we recommend giving breast-fed infants supplemental vitamin D drops, such as **D-Sol** or **Tri-Vi-Sol (1 mL per day)**. We also encourage breastfeeding mothers to continue taking daily prenatal vitamins prescribed by their obstetrician. Breastfeeding should continue as long as possible, ideally through the baby's first year. We will discuss the introduction of solid foods at the four to six month checkups.

Do not give your infant water, juice, tea, or other drinks in the first six months unless otherwise directed by your doctor (as may be advised for constipation).

Breastfeeding resources:

<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding>

<http://www.llli.org/nb.html> or 1-800-LaLeche

www.ilca.org or 1-919-861-5577 to find a local lactation consultant certified by the International Lactation Consultant Association

[ZipMilk](#) - Find Breastfeeding support near you, by entering your zip code

[LactMed](#)- a database on drugs and lactation from the National Library of Medicine and Lactation

[KellyMom](#) - breastfeeding and parenting information

Morton Plant Lactation (727) 953-9107

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Formula

For babies who will be receiving formula, we recommend a cow's milk formula with iron. Formula is available in three forms: powder, ready-to-use, and liquid concentrate. To prepare liquid concentrate, rinse the top of the can with water, and mix equal portions of concentrate and water. You can make either one bottle at a time or the entire can. If you are supplied by city water, it is not necessary to boil the water. However, boil well-water for ten minutes and let it cool before preparing the formula. Once the can is opened, use the contents within 48 hours. Bottles should be capped, or the can covered with plastic wrap, and stored in the refrigerator. Sterilization of bottles and supplies is not necessary. Wash bottles and nipples with hot soapy water or in a dishwasher. Allow them to air dry.

Formula should be served at room temperature. Run hot tap water over the bottle for a few minutes or soak it in a pan of hot water. **Do not heat the bottle in a microwave oven.**

When feeding, hold your infant in a comfortable position with the head slightly raised. Do not prop the bottle and leave the baby to feed unattended. Begin with two ounces per feeding, but more may be added if the baby finishes the initial amount. If your baby does not finish the bottle at a feeding, that's ok too. When your baby has had enough to eat they will reject the nipple or fall asleep. Note that rejecting the nipple may be an indication that your baby needs to be burped. Allow your baby to guide you with needs for increasing the amount of formula, to a maximum of six to eight ounces by two months. If the bottle is not finished within one hour, discard the remainder. Do not re-feed from the same bottle.

Be flexible with the feeding schedule. We recommend demand feeding, which varies from two to four hours. During the day, wake your baby at four hour intervals for feeding. If the baby sleeps more than this amount at night, enjoy the sleep!

Solid Food

We suggest starting solids between four and six months. Continue breast milk or formula until your baby turns one year old. Since cow's milk doesn't supply the balanced nutrition your child needs and is often hard on infants' sensitive digestive systems, it should not be used to replace breast-milk or formula until one year of age (although dairy products such as yogurt may be used starting at 6 months of age, just not in quantities that are replacing routine breast-milk or formula). We recommend whole milk after the first birthday and 2% milk at age two. Infant cereals: Begin with a tablespoon of cereal and mix with formula or breast milk to make it thick enough to stay on the spoon. Give your baby a tablespoon per day for three to four days. If there is no adverse reaction, serve cereal twice daily. Gradually increase the amount every one to two weeks to a maximum of four to six tablespoons per serving.

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Fruits and vegetables: Serve single ingredient fruits and vegetables at first.

We advise following a routine eating schedule such as:

AM: breast-feed or bottle, cereal, fruit

Noon: breast-feed or bottle, fruit or vegetable

PM: breast-feed or bottle, fruit, vegetable, and cereal

When your baby is five to six months old, add other foods to this schedule, including meats. Continue breast milk or formula with iron until one year of age.

By six to nine months, introduce your child to drinking from a cup. Most babies can be weaned from the bottle at nine to twelve months of age. **Do not put your child to sleep with a bottle of milk or juice as this can cause serious tooth decay.**

As your baby gets older and acquires more teeth, offer different textures of food. **Avoid choking hazards, such as nuts, uncut hot dogs, popcorn, raw carrots, and whole grapes. Do not give honey prior to 12 months of age, which can cause infant botulism.**

Burping

You should initially burp your baby after consuming approximately one ounce of formula. When breast-feeding, burp the baby about halfway through each breast and again when finished nursing at the breast. The frequency of burping can be reduced as your child grows.

Occasional spitting up is normal for babies and is usually due to swallowed air or excessive intake. Feeding in a more upright position or additional burping may reduce spitting up.

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