

# Breastfeeding: good for Baby, good for Mum



*Growing Strong* Feeding you and your baby

Great state. Great opportunity.

When Baby is around six months of age and starts to eat solid foods, they should still have breastmilk as well because it is so good for them.

In fact, breastmilk is good for Baby up to two years of age or older.

## Benefits

- Breastfeeding is a special time for Mum and Baby.
- Breastmilk is cheap and is always ready for Baby.
- Breastfeeding also helps Mum to get back in shape.
- Breastmilk helps protect Baby from illnesses such as gut infections, ear infections, chest infections and asthma.
- Breastmilk is even more important to keep Baby healthy if they were born very small or very large.
- Breastfeeding can help protect Baby from becoming overweight, developing diabetes or other illness later in life.
- Breastfeeding helps Baby and Mum stay well, so you spend less money on medicine and have less worry.



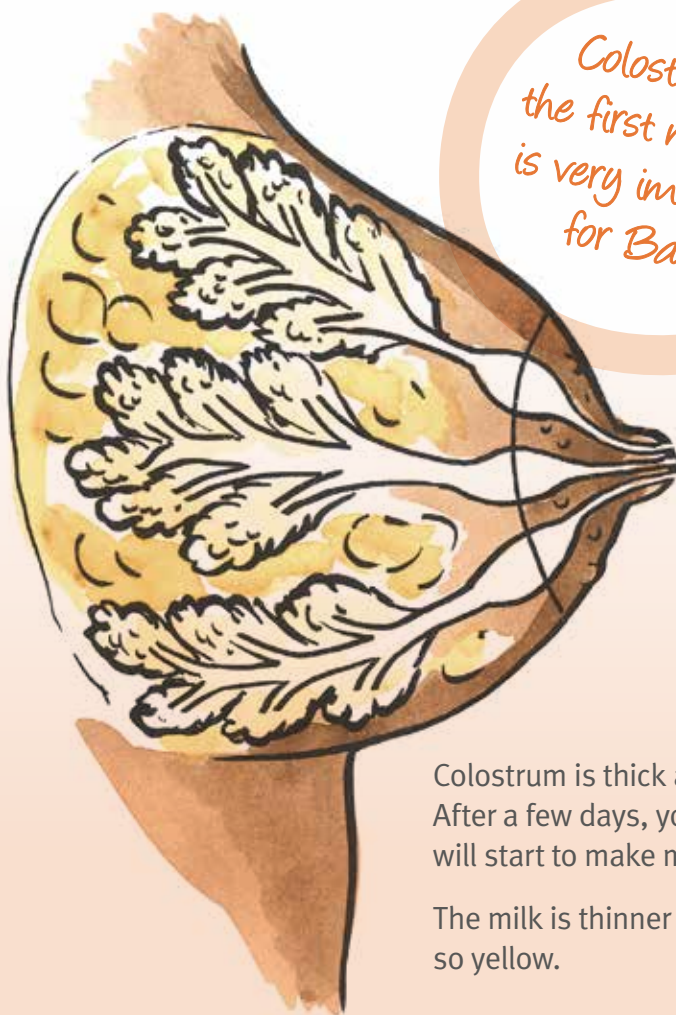
Until Baby is  
around six months  
of age, breastmilk  
is the only food or  
drink needed.



## The first milk – colostrum

Colostrum gets Baby's digestion working and helps to fight germs.

*Colostrum is  
the first milk and  
is very important  
for Baby.*



Colostrum is thick and yellow.  
After a few days, your breasts  
will start to make milk.

The milk is thinner and not  
so yellow.

## Breast feeding your newborn

Newborn babies need several feeds at night as well as lots of daytime feeds. Don't worry about how long it is since baby had the last feed.

*Newborn  
babies need to  
be breastfed  
often.*





### Early signs that Baby is hungry

- Moving head from side to side as if looking for your breast.
- Sucking fist, fingers or thumbs.
- Turning face into your breast.

*Watch to see if Baby is hungry.*



### Late signs that Baby is hungry

- Moving head frantically from side to side.
- Crying – once Baby is crying it can be hard to get them to feed properly.

*Calm Baby by cuddling and talking to them and then feed Baby.*



## How do you know if Baby is having enough breastmilk?

Sometimes mums worry that they won't have enough breastmilk.

If Baby is having enough breastmilk you will see:

- Bright eyes
- Moist mouth and tongue
- Usually happy – even though there are some unsettled times
- Some weight gain over the month
- Pale coloured pee
- Five or more wet nappies every day.

Baby doesn't need top-up feeds of formula. Top-up feeds mean that Baby will suck less and you won't produce as much breastmilk.

*The more often  
you feed Baby,  
the more breastmilk  
you will make.*





## How to Breastfeed

Breastmilk is made in small sacs in the breast. Each sac has muscles around them. These muscles squeeze the sacs, forcing the breastmilk out. This is called the letdown reflex.

*Your milk  
will flow better  
when you are  
relaxed and  
comfortable.*





## What to do to help breastmilk letdown

- Place your thumb and fingers on opposite sides of your breast, just behind the areola (the darker skin around your nipple).
- Gently squeeze the breast between your thumb and fingers.





- Use a breastpump to express a small amount of breastmilk.
- Have a warm shower.
- Relax – get someone to give you a back rub.



## Getting Baby onto the breast

- Make yourself comfortable.
- Hold Baby close.
- Support Baby's head and shoulders but do not push on the back of their head.

*Let Baby  
feed as long as  
they want.*





- Baby's head should be tilted back a little.
- Baby should be facing your nipple. Their chest and tummy should also face you with their feet and legs close to your body.
- Baby's nose should be level with your nipple.
- Let Baby lick and smell the breast if they want.
- Expressing a few drops of breastmilk can encourage Baby to feed.
- You can gently brush Baby's mouth with the underside of your nipple to encourage Baby's mouth to open.





- Some mums use their fingers to shape their breast to make it easier for Baby to attach.
- You can gently brush Baby's mouth with the lower of your nipple to encourage Baby's mouth to open.
- Baby's chin should touch breast first, this should open baby's mouth and bring them onto the breast.
- If needed when Baby's mouth is wide open, bring to the breast.
- Some babies will have a rest at the breast and then start sucking again.



## Is Baby on right?

- The chin is touching the breast and the nose is clear.
- Baby has a mouth full of breast.
- Lips are flared out, not sucked in.

*A midwife or lactation consultant can help you to get Baby attached right.*



- Baby's sucking will slow as your milk lets down.

- Your nipples are not sore or squashed.



## What to do if breastfeeding hurts

- Take Baby off the breast – put your finger into Baby's mouth to break the suction.
- Try attaching again.
- Try holding Baby in different ways.



- Put breastmilk on your nipples at the end of a feed – if possible let them air dry.
- If you use breast pads, change them often.

*It is normal to need help and advice during breastfeeding. Mum and bub are both learning.*



## Growth spurts

- The more you feed Baby, the more breastmilk you make. Your body will not run out of breastmilk, but you will need to feed more often for a few days.

*Breastfed babies have growth spurts when Baby will want to feed a lot more often. This is normal for a healthy baby.*



## How to make more breastmilk

- Breastfeed as often as Baby will feed.
- Don't use a dummy – let Baby breastfeed for comfort.
- Don't give Baby top-ups with formula or other foods



## Working and breastfeeding

Talk to your employer when you are pregnant.

Some choices are:

- Have as long off work as you can.
- Work from home.
- Work part time.
- Have someone bring your baby to you when a breastfeed is needed.
- Use a child carer close to your work.
- Express breastmilk at work.





# Growing Strong

## Feeding you and your baby

For more information contact your local health worker  
or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).



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