

## Breastfeeding and Formula

### Common Concerns about Breastfeeding

#### **“I’m not sure I have enough milk.”**

During the first days of breastfeeding, many mothers worry that they do not have enough milk for their baby. Because colostrum (the milk during the first 3-4 days after your baby is born) is very concentrated and you cannot “feel” it flow from your breast, you may even wonder if your baby is getting any milk when you breastfeed. Colostrum has exactly what your baby needs. Newborns have small stomachs and it doesn’t take a lot to fill them up. The colostrum you are making is the perfect amount for your new baby who is learning to breastfeed.

#### **“My milk has not come in.”**

Your milk will change from colostrum to mature milk usually within 2-5 days after you give birth. Your breasts will feel fuller or heavier because there is a larger amount of mature milk. This is often referred to as milk “coming in,” but this is misleading because your breasts were not empty before this time. Your healthcare providers are monitoring your baby’s weight daily to make sure he is not losing too much weight.

#### **“I am going back to work and I am going to have to give formula at some point.”**

The more you breastfeed during the first few days of your baby’s life, the more you will stimulate your body to make milk. Talk to your lactation consultant about giving your baby pumped breast milk once you return to work or school. Once breastfeeding is well established a bottle can be introduced.

Here are ways you can be assured that even in the first days of breastfeeding your baby is getting enough to eat:

- Your baby **feeds** at your breast **at least** 8 to 12 times every 24 hours.
- You hear, see and/or feel your baby swallowing after every few sucks (with colostrum you may not see and/or feel swallowing as often as feeding when you have mature milk, around day 3).
- Your baby has at least as many wet diapers as days he is old (1 on day 1, 2 on day 2, 3 on day 3 and so on) until he has at least 6 wet diapers every 24 hours by the time he is 5-6 days old.
- There are at least 3 teaspoon sized bowel movements every 24 hours by day 3.
- By 4 Days the bowel movements have changed from brown and sticky to yellow watery or yellow curdy.
- Your baby does not lose too much weight during the first few days after birth; he is back to birth weight by the time he is two weeks old. (Nurses will weigh your baby while he is here at the hospital; you will need to have your baby weighed at the pediatrician’s office or medical clinic within 2-3 days after you take your baby home.)

### **Benefits of breastfeeding**

When feeding your baby there are some important things you need to know. In almost every situation, the very best milk you can give to your baby is your breast milk. Breast milk provides every nutrient your baby needs not just to grow, but to be healthy. Breast milk is easy for your baby to digest; it changes to provide the exact nutrients your baby needs. Your milk has protective antibodies that help protect your baby from infections. For all of these reasons and many more, it is recommended that your baby receive nothing but breast milk (no formula, water or other drink or foods) for the first six months of life. From the moment your baby is born, your milk is the BEST milk.

- Any amount of breastfeeding has benefits for you and your baby.
- Studies have shown that breastfeeding a healthy baby on cue, without formula, encourages the mature milk to come in sooner, within 24-48 hours.
- Exclusively (fully) breastmilk fed babies have:
  - Lower risk of allergies
  - Lower risk of diabetes
  - Lower risk of obesity
  - Lower risk of ear infections and upper respiratory infections
  - Lower risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

## **Formula**

### **Ways to give formula other than a bottle**

To prevent your baby from becoming confused while learning to breastfeed we recommend giving formula without using a bottle.

- Offer formula in a spoon, cup or syringe
- Offer formula at the breast through a tiny tube at the nipple

### **Using a Bottle to Supplement Formula**

Bottles have long nipples that may flow very fast. Some breastfeeding babies will refuse to nurse once they have become used to a bottle. For this reason it is not recommended giving the healthy, breast feeding newborn a bottle until (s)he is around 4 weeks of age. When a baby is learning to breastfeed, using a bottle may interfere with learning this skill, causing difficulties such as:

- Not latching and/or suckling correctly on the breast
- Confusion by the baby as to which suck to use because sucking on a bottle nipple is a different jaw and tongue motion than sucking on the breast
- Your milk supply may be decreased and it may take longer to make enough milk for your baby

Bottle feeding increases the possibility that your breasts will become hard and painfully uncomfortable making it more difficult for the baby to latch for feedings. Once your milk supply is well established and your baby is a skilled breastfeeder, there is less chance that introducing a bottle of your pumped milk or formula will cause these difficulties.

### **Paced Bottle feeding**

Breastfed babies are able to control the flow of milk as they feed and may find bottle feeding stressful. It may look like the baby is really hungry and gulping the milk down. The baby may be doing all they can to swallow fast enough to keep from choking. One way to avoid this is to pace the bottle feeding.

With paced bottle feeding the baby will eat what they want and need. The baby does not overfeed and this encourages the baby to want to practice breastfeeding more often. This will help you maintain a good milk supply.

Paced bottle feeding helps avoid behaviors such as clamping or biting on the nipple to slow the milk flow. If these behaviors are used when the baby returns to breastfeeding, you are likely to develop very sore nipples. We can provide you with additional information on paced bottle feeding and the amount of formula to feed your baby.

Please understand we do not provide formula when you leave the hospital. If you need information on WIC please let your provider know.

Approved by Baby Friendly Steering Committee 1/14/16