

Feeding and caring for your baby

Information for parents and carers

Congratulations on the birth of your baby!



This booklet is full of information to help you get off to the best start with **feeding**, **caring for**, and **comforting** your baby.

We want you to have all the information you need to make safe and informed choices for you and your baby.

Receiving only breast / chest milk is healthiest for babies. We want to help you give your baby as much of your milk as you can or choose. There are health benefits for you too.

A link to information on bottle feeding expressed milk, formula milk, and combination feeding (a mix of feeding types) can be found on page 14.

This booklet can also be viewed and saved here



[Feeding and Caring for Your Baby](#)

This booklet does not cover all possible situations or replace personalised support and advice. Some advice may change as your baby gets older. Please ask staff if you have questions or need help at any time.



Yellow boxes show which information is helpful or important for **all** parents / carers, no matter how you are feeding your baby.

Parent / Carer's Baby Care Record

In the early days, it is helpful for you and your midwife to have a record of your baby's feeds, nappies, and care. This helps everyone to feel confident that baby is well.

You will be given a **Parent / Carers' Baby Care Record**. If you need any help with this form, please ask a member of staff.

Start a new chart every midnight. Once you are home and feeding is established, you do not need to keep a record.



BABY STICKER		Parent / Carers' Baby Care Record		NHS United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	
Date: _____		Please use this chart to record your baby's care and feeds while you are in hospital. This will help staff to support you with feeding your baby and help you to know that your baby is well. Please let staff know any time if you have any questions, need feeding support, or have any concerns about your baby.		Start a new chart at midnight for each new 24 hour period. This form is part of our record of your care and when you are discharged it will be kept with the hospital notes.	
Your Baby's Feeds		Time			
Minutes latched and sucking	Left				
	Right				
Expressed milk (mL)					
Formula (mL)					
Syringe					
Cup					
Bottle					
Your Baby's Wellbeing					
Skin to skin					
Wet nappy					
Dirty nappy					
Vomit					
I have no concerns about my baby's feeding or wellbeing					
I have some concerns about my baby's feeding or wellbeing - please alert staff					

Skin to skin contact

Skin to skin contact has benefits for you and your baby

- ★ Promotes bonding
- ★ Keeps baby warm
- ★ Helps baby to feed better
- ★ Calms baby and mum
- ★ Stabilises baby's breathing and heart rate
- ★ Increases the hormones which make your milk



Your feeding journey

Did you know....

Every feeding journey is different.

It takes practice before you feel confident with holding or latching your baby. Learning to feed is a new skill for your baby too! Take each feed as it comes. Challenges in the early days do not mean you will not be able to reach your destination.



Comforting and caring for your baby

Did you know....

Every time you comfort and respond to your baby, a hormone is released which helps their brain development!



Simple things you can do to comfort and care for your baby....

- Keep your baby close
- Cuddle and hold your baby
- Skin to skin contact
- Talk, read, or sing to baby
- Breast / chest feed when baby shows feeding cues or is upset
- Pick up and respond to your baby when they cry

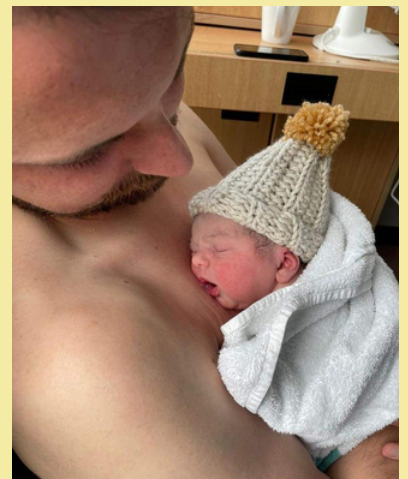
Can you “spoil” a baby?

We now know that you cannot “spoil” a baby by picking them up. Responding to your baby helps them become more secure and confident. Leaving babies alone to cry can be very stressful for them.

Partners and other support persons

Partners and support persons have a very important role to play in soothing, comforting, and playing with baby between feeds.

Practical and emotional support for the birth parent is also so helpful. Your support makes a huge difference!



When to feed your baby

Your baby should feed 8-12 times in every 24 hour period. Offer your baby a feed whenever they show feeding cues.

Feeding cues are shown in the pictures below.



Did you know....

If you are breast / chest feeding, you can also offer your baby a feed if...

- They are upset or need comfort
- You feel full or uncomfortable in your breasts / chest

Baby feeding cues (signs)

Early cues

"I'm hungry"



Stirring



Mouth opening



Turning head
Seeking/rooting

Mid cues

"I'm really hungry"



Stretching



Increasing
physical movement



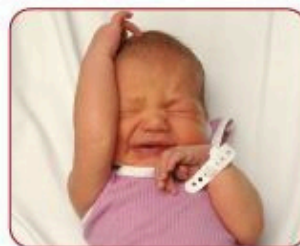
Hand to mouth

Late cues

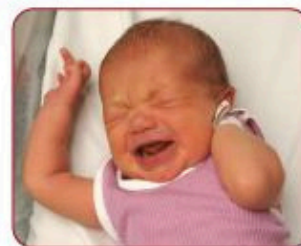
"Calm me, then feed me"



Crying



Agitated body
movements



Colour turning red

Time to calm crying baby

- Cuddling
- Talking
- Skin-to-skin on chest
- Stroking

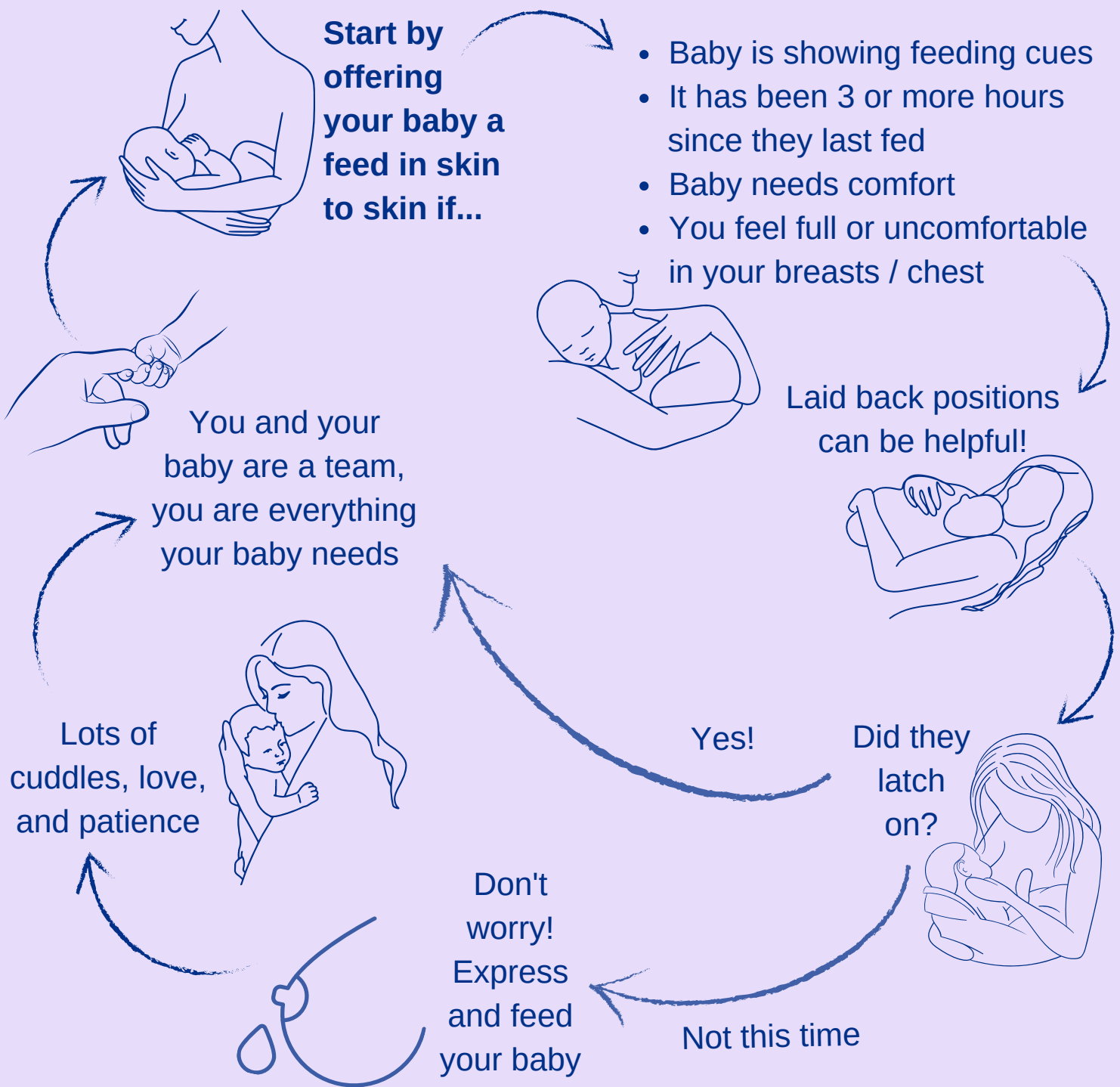


Unless you or your baby are unwell, your baby should stay with you at all times while in hospital. This helps you notice their early feeding cues.

Top Tip

It is harder for babies to latch if they are upset. Try not to wait until your baby is showing late cues.

What to do at each feed



Offer feeds in skin to skin at least every 3 hours. Do not worry if your baby does not latch. This is common, especially in the early days. Some babies need more time to practice.

Any time your baby does not latch, express to stimulate your milk supply. See page 12 for how to hand express. Give any milk that you express to your baby.

Give your baby lots of love and cuddles then try again at the next feed. Let a staff member know if you want extra support or have questions about your milk supply or your baby.

How milk is made



If you know how your milk is made, it can help you...

- ★ Understand why your baby needs to feed often
- ★ Respond to their cues
- ★ Trust in your body



[How Lactation Works](#)

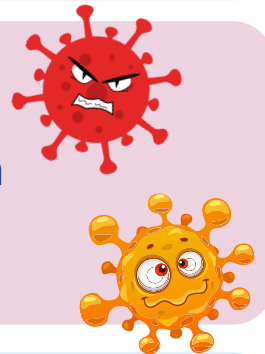
Watch this great video to learn how your milk is made!

Colostrum

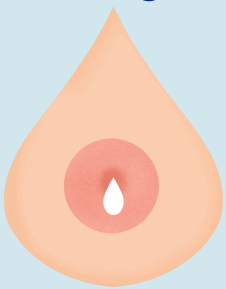
The first milk “colostrum” is made in tiny amounts. This is all most babies need to begin with. Feeding or expressing tells your body to make more milk. Around days 2-5 after your baby is born, your body will start making bigger volumes of milk.

Did you know....

Your milk changes from feed to feed. If you come into contact with viruses or germs, your milk makes antibodies against them. Antibodies help protect your baby from these infections.



Did you know....



Giving other milk can reduce your milk supply. This is because your breast / chest has less stimulation. Let a member of staff know if you feel your baby needs extra milk. They can help by checking how feeding is going. If needed, they can support you to express. This will boost your milk supply.

Top Tip

Using dummies, teats, and nipple shields may reduce your milk supply, because your breast / chest has less stimulation. After using these, some babies can find it trickier to latch onto your nipple. If you want to use a dummy, try to wait until breast / chest feeding is established.

Holding your baby for a feed

Did you know....

How the baby needs to latch on is not what you might expect!

Baby needs to get your nipple right to the back and top of their mouth. This helps the milk to flow easily and stops your nipples getting sore.

To help with this, baby needs to take more of the tissue **below** the nipple into their mouth. This is called an “off-centre” or “asymmetric” latch.

How you hold your baby affects how well they latch. It can take practice, but small adjustments can make a huge difference!

The word **CHIN** can help you remember how best to hold your baby so they can latch deeply...

C - hold your baby very **CLOSE** to your body

H - your baby's **HEAD** is free to tip back

I - your baby's head and body are **IN A LINE**

N - your nipple is pointing to baby's **NOSE**

There are lots of different ways to hold your baby for breast / chest feeding.

Some different holds are shown in a video here



Not everyone is the same!

Breasts, chests, and nipples have many shapes and sizes. This is normal. Please ask for tips when feeding. Some tips may work better for you and your baby.



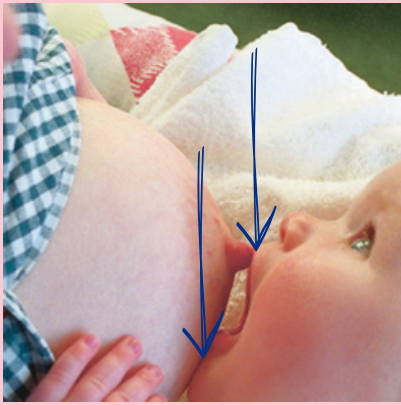
Short videos on breast / chest feeding



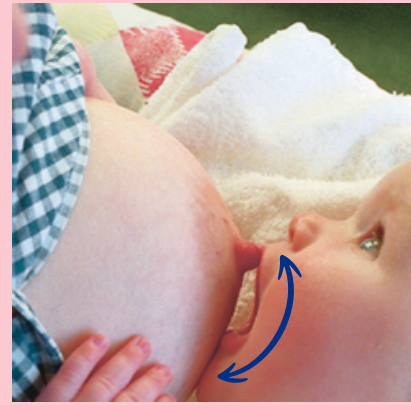
[Breastfeeding Videos](#)
- [Global Health Media Project](#)



Latching your baby



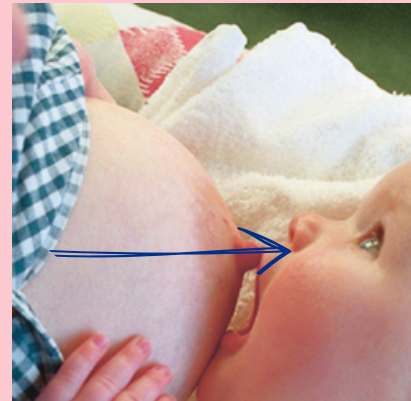
Baby's chin and bottom lip are touching the breast / chest **before** their top lip - baby has their **head tipped back**



Wait for your baby to do a very **wide mouth**, like a yawn. You might need to be patient!



Keep your baby's bottom lip **well down** from your nipple as they latch on so they can get a big mouthful of breast / chest tissue



Keep your nipple aimed up towards the back of your baby's mouth at the top



Bring baby on quickly, **chin leading first**. It's easier for baby to get the milk out if their chin is pressed deeply into your breast / chest.



As they latch, try **not** to lift your baby up, or push your nipple down into their mouth. Their bottom lip will end up too close to your nipple. **This will make it less likely they will latch deeply.**

Is your baby latched well?

What you should see...

- Baby's chin should be firmly pressed **into** your breast / chest
- Baby should be latched on with their mouth still open very wide
- Baby's cheeks should be full and round
- **If** you can see any of the darker skin around your nipple, more should be visible **above** baby's top lip than below their bottom lip. Not everyone will see this as everyone's body is different!



Baby should have a big mouthful from below your nipple - **this is a good sign!**

Your baby..

- Should suck fast at first and then take slower, rhythmic sucks with some pauses
- Should be calm and content during the feed and stay latched on
- Should swallow well once your milk comes in - you should be able to see or hear this

For you...

- Feeding baby should be **pain free** after the first few sucks
- Your nipple should not look pinched or lipstick-shaped after a feed
- Your nipples should not become sore or damaged

Breast / chest feeding checklist







You can find a breast / chest feeding checklist here



[Breastfeeding Checklist](#)

Is baby getting plenty of milk?

If your baby is getting plenty of milk, **each day** they should have at LEAST...

	Wet nappies	Dirty nappies
1-2 days old		
3-4 days old		
5+ days old		

Your baby's wellbeing

It is important to know the signs that your baby is well or when to get help.

Your baby should...

- ✓ Feel warm to touch on their back or neck
- ✓ Wake regularly for feeds
- ✓ Breathe easily
- ✓ Have strong muscle tone

Alert a member of staff if your baby...

- ✗ Looks pale, ashy, blue, blotchy, or mottled
- ✗ Is not waking or responding in their usual way
- ✗ Becomes floppy or limp
- ✗ Makes noise or seems to be struggling when they breathe - you may see their nostrils widen, or chest, ribs, or stomach suck in
- ✗ Has a weak, high-pitched, or continuous cry



Baby Check App
available to
download



[The Baby Check App](#)
- [The Lullaby Trust](#)



All breast / chest fed babies should get a Vitamin D supplement every day from birth

Some babies may develop a yellow colour on their skin or in their eyes. This is called jaundice.

Jaundice is common in newborn babies but let a staff member know if you notice it. Some babies may need extra tests or treatment.

Common challenges

My baby is not latching yet...

Babies are often a little sleepy in the early days or need more time to learn to latch. Lots of skin to skin contact and expressing tells your body to make plenty of milk. You can give your baby your milk by syringe or cup while they practice latching on.

If you and your baby are well, you can go home when you feel ready. If you go home while you and your baby are still establishing feeding, you may be given a personalised feeding plan.



Did you know.... There is **no** time-limit for your baby to learn to latch!

My baby wants to feed all the time

Feeding often is important to help establish your milk supply. Babies usually feed at least 8 to 12 times day. Babies don't only breast / chest feed because they are hungry. It is **normal** for babies to feed for food, thirst, comfort, and to fall asleep.

It is rare not to be able to produce enough milk for your baby. Extra support is sometimes needed in the early weeks to establish your milk supply.

My baby is crying

Crying is one way babies communicate. Some babies cry less and some babies cry more. We know it is not always easy when your baby is crying. Skin to skin, cuddles, and breast / chest feeding can all help soothe your baby.

Please let a member of staff know if you are worried about your baby's crying. There is lots of support available.



[ICON Cope](#)

Expressing your milk

Expressing can be helpful while you are establishing feeding. You can express to relieve fullness or engorgement in your breasts / chest, provide milk for your baby, or boost your milk supply. Some people never need to express. Equipment like pumps can be expensive and may not be needed.



Before you express, do some gentle breast / chest massage, touch your nipples, think relaxing thoughts, look at or hold your baby. All of these things help your milk to flow.

How to hand express

- Cup your breast / chest and put your thumb and finger about 2-3cm away from your nipple.
- Use your thumb and the rest of your fingers in a C shape. Gently but firmly compress and release in a rhythm. This should not hurt.
- If colostrum does not appear after a few minutes, try moving your fingers towards your nipple or further away. Find where works best for you.
- Be careful not to 'slide' your fingers along your skin. This can stop the milk flowing.
- When the drips slow down, move your fingers around to express a different section of your breast/chest. Compress and release again.
- When the drips slow again, move to the other side and repeat.

If you do not see any colostrum, don't worry, just ask for help to check your hand expressing technique.

Remember to wash your hands before expressing!



You can collect your colostrum in colostrum syringes

Storing your expressed milk

Expressed milk can be kept at room temperature if you will be giving it to your baby within **5 hours**. Otherwise it can be labelled and stored in our milk fridge or freezer. Don't forget to take any stored expressed milk home with you!



Preterm or ill babies



Breast / chest milk is **very important** for babies on the Neonatal Unit. Providing your milk for your baby gives a very special protection that can only come from you. It is like your baby's first medicine.

Among many other benefits, providing your milk reduces the chance of your baby developing some serious illnesses and infections.

If you have a baby on the Neonatal Unit, staff will discuss hand expressing with you very soon after birth.

Top Tip

The more of your milk your baby receives, the more protection you are giving them. If you can, try and give some fresh milk every day to provide the most current antibodies.

Twins and Multiples



Did you know....

Parents often wonder if they will be able to make enough milk for more than one baby. It can be reassuring to know this is possible.

Frequent feeding, or early and regular expressing if your babies are not yet directly feeding, will help establish your milk supply.



There is lots of helpful information on the *Breastfeeding Twins and Triplets* website 



[Breastfeeding Twins and Triplets](#)

Support

After you are discharged from hospital, community staff will visit regularly. You can also telephone the postnatal ward for advice any time, day or night.

Lincoln County Hospital

01522 573 134

Boston Pilgrim Hospital

01205 445 427



Contacting a Health Visitor

01522 843 000

Other sources of support



**national
breastfeeding
helpline**

0300 100 0212

Available every day of the year by telephone or visit
www.facebook.com/nationalbreastfeedinghelpline

*You are doing
GREAT!*



[Better Birth Lincolnshire
- Infant Feeding](#)



[ULTH Postnatal Information](#)

Information and details of local support including groups

Mental Health

Welcoming a new baby and becoming a parent can be a big challenge. It is normal to feel lots of different emotions. If you are ever worried about your mental health or that of your partner, always let a health professional know.

You are never alone.



Information on
giving
expressed
milk or formula
by bottle



[Bottle Feeding Your Baby](#)

If you are giving bottles because of worries about breast / chest feeding, please reach out for extra support.

ULHT Specialist Infant Feeding Team

- ★ For complex challenges up to 28 days
- ★ Please ask staff for a referral

