

There is a wealth of evidence that breastfeeding reduces the risk of babies developing infectious diseases. There are numerous live constituents in human milk, including immunoglobulins, antiviral factors, cytokines and leucocytes that help to destroy harmful pathogens and boost the baby's immune system. Considering the protection that human milk and breastfeeding offers the baby and the minimal role it plays in the transmission of other respiratory viruses, it seems sensible to do all we can to continue to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.

Public Health England (PHE) guidance

If you are breastfeeding while infected

There is currently no clinical evidence to suggest that the virus can be transmitted through breastmilk. Infection can be spread to the baby in the same way as to anyone in close contact with you. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of the virus through breastmilk or by being in close contact with your child; however, this will be an individual decision and can be discussed with your midwife, health visitor or GP by telephone. If you wish to breastfeed, take precautions to limit

the potential spread of COVID-19 to the baby by:

- washing your hands before touching the baby, breast pump or bottles
- avoiding coughing or sneezing on the baby while feeding at the breast
- consider wearing a mask, if available whilst feeding at the breast
- cleaning any breast pump as recommended by the manufacturer after each use
- considering asking someone who is well to feed your expressed breastmilk to the baby
- if you are feeding with formula or expressed milk, sterilise the equipment carefully before each use. You should not share bottles or a breast pump with someone else. You can find more information on the [Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#) and [Public Health England](#) websites.



Feeding in the first few days

You and your baby will be getting to know each other. Sometimes babies don't feed straight away; this can be because they are:-

- Too hot/cold
- Mum has had sedation in labour
- Baby is exhausted
- Missed opportunities to learn to feed
- If baby is reluctant to feed, have lots of skin-to-skin contact with your baby
- Baby may also feed very frequently, known as cluster feeding; this is normal and should only last a few days

Knowing your baby is hungry

Your new baby should be with you all of the time so you are able to learn signs that they are hungry; these are known as **Feeding Cues**

Babies 'ask' for feeds by:

- Moving their eyes
- Wriggling and waving
- Rooting
- Sucking fists, blankets etc
- Making murmuring noises
- **Crying is the baby's last resort**



Responding to need and building a relationship

Your baby needs to feel close to you, and this makes them feel loved and safe.

- Cuddling a baby
- Comforting baby
- Talking to baby
- Making eye contact
- Not leaving baby to cry

These responsive actions do not spoil babies but promote brain growth and a reciprocal relationship between parent and child.

<https://youtu.be/i0tqQfTpVdc>

SUSTAINABLE

Remember, babies don't have wants, they have needs...

“Sometimes I just need a cuddle.”

Research says that it is impossible to spoil a baby. They cry for a reason, they cannot manipulate their behaviour.

Cuddling your baby will soothe and comfort them, helping to develop positive relationships and aid brain development.

together
we win

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nbTEG1fOrE&feature=emb_logo

Holding your baby for breastfeeding

- Before starting to feed make sure you are sitting comfortably
- Baby's whole body should be facing you with your hand supporting their shoulders
- Their ear, shoulders and hips should be in a straight line
- Baby should be able to move their head freely

Baby should start nose to nipple

CHINS

Baby is held **CLOSE** to mum

Baby's **HEAD** is free

Baby's body is **IN LINE**

NOSE to **NIPPLE**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSzbrtIT91s&feature=emb_logo

Attachment at the breast

- Hold baby nose to nipple
- Let baby's head tilt back
- Wait for your baby to open their mouth wide
- Firmly bring baby forward with their chin leading.
- Your nipple will slide under baby's top lip



How do you know baby is getting enough milk??

BREASTFEEDING IS GOING WELL WHEN:

- Your baby has 8 feeds or more in 24 hours
- Your baby is feeding for between 5-50 minutes at each feed
- Your baby has normal skin colour (pink)
- Your baby is generally calm and relaxed whilst feeding and is content after most feeds
- Your baby has wet and dirty nappies
- Breastfeeding is comfortable
- When your baby is 3-4 days old you should be able to hear your baby swallowing during the feed

Signs baby is attached well

- Feeding is pain free
- Baby's mouth is open wide
- Baby's chin is indenting your breast
- Baby's cheeks are full and round
- More of your areola (brown area around nipple) can be seen above baby's top lip than below it
- Baby is taking regular sucks and swallows
- Baby's nose is free

TALK TO THE MIDWIFE IF:

- Your baby is very sleepy and has less than 6 feeds in 24 hours
- Your baby is feeding for 5 minutes or less or 50 minutes or more at each feed
- Your baby always falls asleep on the breast or never finishes a feed himself
- Your baby appears jaundiced (yellow)
- Your baby comes on and off the breast frequently during the feed
- Your baby is not having wet and dirty nappies
- You are experiencing pain in your breasts and/or nipples which doesn't disappear after the baby's first few sucks.
- Your nipple comes out of baby's mouth looking pinched or flattened on one side
- You cannot tell if your baby is swallowing any milk when your baby is 3-4 days old or beyond
- You think your baby needs a dummy
- You feel you need to give your baby formula milk



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Hand Expression

Early days:

- Tempts your baby to feed
- Kick-starts your milk production
- Relieves engorgement
- Shows you that you have milk
- Obtains milk for a baby who cannot feed
- Avoids formula supplements if your baby is reluctant to suckle at the breast initially

Long-term:

- Prevent and manage problems, e.g. mastitis
- Social reasons (e.g. return to work)

You may be able to begin hand expressing from 37 weeks of pregnancy, but discuss this with your midwife first to make sure it is safe for you to do so

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0zVCwDJZw0&feature=emb_logo

How to hand express

- Find the right spot
- Make a 'C' shape with thumb and fingers
- Squeeze gently
- Get a rhythm going
- Small drops, then squirts
- As flow subsides:
- Rotate around the breast
- Move to other breast



What happens if I need to give my baby a bottle?

The use of a bottle to give an extra feed is not normally required for health, full term (over 37 weeks) babies that feed well at the breast. If you do give a bottle to a breast fed baby it may:-

- Reduce your milk supply
- Reduce your confidence in your breastmilk
- It may alter the healthy bacteria that is in your baby's tummy
- Your breasts may become full and uncomfortable



Infant-formula-and-responsive-bottle-feeding



start4life_guide_to_bottle_feeding.pdf

If however you do need to give a bottle

- Hold baby close to you in an upright position
- Gently encourage your baby to open their mouth with the teat by rubbing it over their top lip
- Wait for baby to open their mouth wide
- Never force a feed
- Restrict the number of people who feed baby
- Allow plenty of breaks through the feed

If you have any feeding queries please contact your midwife or the Infant Feeding Midwife:-0151 604 7682 extn 7425

Other useful contact numbers

Infant Feeding Midwife:-0151 604 7682 extn 7425

Postnatal Ward: - 0151 678 5111 extn 2144

Homestart Peer Support: - 0151 6088288

Community Midwives Office: - 0151 604 7682

National Breastfeeding Helpline: - 0300 100 0212

NCT Breastfeeding Helpline:-0300 330 0700

NCT Breast Pump Hire: - Francis 0151 334 8119

Wirral and Chester Mothers Milk Bank:- 0151 482 7599

**Useful Websites**

Association of Breastfeeding
Mothers www.abm.me.uk

Best Beginnings
www.bestbeginnings.info

Breast Feeding Network
www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

L Leche League
www.lalecheleague.org

NCT www.nct.org.uk

Twins and Multiple birth Association
www.tamba.org.uk

UNICEF www.babyfriendly.org.uk

Wirral Community Health Trust
www.wirralct.nhs.uk

Wirral University Teaching Hospital
www.whnt.nhs.uk

Breastfeeding after breast surgery
www.bfar.org

Get Wirral Breastfeeding
www.facebook.com/getwirralbreastfeeding

Wirral Sling Library
www.facebook.com/thewirralslinglibrary

Homestart
www.homestartwirral.co.uk

The Breastfeeding Network
www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk