

Newborn Breastfeeding Check Lists

Directions: You will know breastfeeding is going well if you can check all of the points under questions one (1) and two (2). You need help if you check any of the points under question three (3). Hang this page in a place where you can easily see it and use it.

1. Am I breastfeeding correctly?

You are nursing correctly when:

- ☐ You are sitting straight, *slightly reclined* and *your body is supported and you feel comfortable.*
- ☐ The baby's body is facing the breast and is well supported from the head to the buttocks.
- ☐ You can look down and see some of the areola above the baby's mouth. Lift your breast up; the baby's lower lip is curled down against his chin.
- ☐ When the baby moves his mouth you see big jaw movements and hear swallows.
- ☐ The baby looks relaxed and you feel a strong pull on your nipple, not a painful pinch.
- ☐ The baby's neck is slightly tilted back, with the chin pushing into the breast and the nose off the breast.

Please note: The authors consider baby girls as important and precious as baby boys. The consistent use of he is for reading ease only. These directions will work with babies of both sexes.

2. Is my baby getting enough to eat?

Your baby is getting enough to eat if:

- ☐ He is content after feeding.
- ☐ After your milk comes in the baby has at least 4-6 large, yellow, runny stools and at least 4 wet diapers daily.
- ☐ Your breasts feel full and firm when you first start feeding the baby. When you are done feeding, they feel softer.
- ☐ You can see changes in his behavior as he feeds. Look for tightly clenched fists, wide open eyes, and strong, fast sucking at the beginning of a feed. As your baby becomes full, he will relax, suck slower and become sleepy. This takes between 10 and 20 minutes.
- ☐ He is waking up to feed at least 7 times a day.
- ☐ He is steadily gaining weight.
- ☐ You feel good after the feeding and the baby seems content.
- ☐ Your nipples feel slightly tender, but are not cracked, scabbed, or bleeding.

3. When do I need Help?

You need help if:

- ☐ Your milk has not come in by the 4th day after birth.
- ☐ Your baby does not have at least one stool a day before your milk comes in (in about 2-4 days); and once your milk is in, at least 4-6 mustard yellow, runny stools a day.
- ☐ Your breasts do not feel softer when the baby is finished feeding.
- ☐ You feel you can never put the baby down, because he cries all the time. Or, you are worried that he is not getting enough to eat.
- ☐ You dread nursing because your nipples hurt the entire time you feed your baby.
- ☐ Your baby cries all the time.
- ☐ Your baby sleeps all the time.

If you experience any of these problems, call:
