

## Breastfeeding 101

### WHY BREASTFEED?

1. **Immune Benefits** - Breastmilk provides an essential part of the baby's immune system. It is a living substance that has white cells (infection fighting cells), and a myriad of other immunomodulators. Breastmilk teaches the baby's immune system how to act. It also provides the inside "microbiome" or good flora that provides a protective barrier, the "guardian of the gates."
2. **Breastfed babies have:**
  - 2-7 times less allergies, eczema
  - 3 times less ear infections
  - 3 times less gastroenteritis (vomiting and diarrheal illness)
  - 3.8 times less meningitis
  - 2.6-5.5 less urinary tract infections
  - 2.4 times less diabetes type 1
  - 2 times less SIDS
  - 1.7-5 times less pneumonia / lower respiratory tract infections
  - 1.5-1.9 times less inflammatory bowel disease
  - 1-6.7 times less Hodgkin's lymphoma
3. **Moms who breastfed** have less Breast Cancer (reduced by 4% for every year of exclusive breastfeeding), obesity, and Diabetes type 2.
4. **Infant Mortality** - In a study by Chen, et. Al., breastfeeding was associated with a 20% reduction in Infant Mortality. Unicef issued the statement, "1 million lives would be saved by exclusively breastfeeding for 6 months."

### TOP 10 REASONS TO BREASTFEED (created by the Shelby County Breastfeeding Coalition)

10. Breastfeeding is Disaster Preparedness!
9. It's designed for Humans.
8. It's always warm and no preparation required.
7. It is the fastest way to lose your pregnancy weight!
6. It's good for the environment.
5. It reduces the risk to mother of breast cancer and obesity
4. It reduces the risk to baby of infections, SIDS, and obesity.
3. It's what they are there for anyway!
2. It provides baby's first vaccines.
1. The price is right!

### WHY DON'T ALL WOMEN BREASTFEED? Babies are Born to be Breastfed!

Formula came out in my parents time, and it quickly became the norm for infant feeding. I guess because the rich people had it, everyone wanted it. Since our parents didn't breastfeed, the skill was lost. Cultural images probably conspire against breastfeeding, as do men who have incorrect notions of the role of the breast. Many women don't realize they can go back to work and breastfeed with the help of pumping. Many women don't realize that WIC helps get breastpumps to working moms.

**HOW TO GET STARTED?** It helps to take a Prenatal Class that discusses breastfeeding. Then right after the baby is born, be sure to get the nurse to help you put the baby to breast during this

"Golden Hour." I find it best to hold the baby with one hand at the back of the baby's head, and your other hand controlling your breast. Look for the baby rooting, as a sign they are ready to nurse. The baby should nurse for 20 minutes, at least every 3 hours counting from the start of the last feeding. While in the hospital, all the newborn nurses can help with feeding, as well as the Lactation Consultant. Tell your nurse you don't want any other nipples, like pacifiers or bottles. The baby can still go to the nursery so you can get naps during those 3 hour stretches!

### **HOW DO YOU KNOW IF BREASTFEEDING IS GOING WELL??**

1. If you have a good latch, it shouldn't hurt except at the very start of suckling.
2. Look for long sucks, 8-15 in a row. These sucks are long and slow, approximately one second long. The lower jaw really moves in with each suck. You can see this best in the Cross Cradle hold. Short 1-2-3 sucks are what we call "non-nutritive sucks"- in other words, the baby is likely sleeping and using you as a pacifier.
3. Listen and watch the baby's neck for swallowing sounds and movement of the "Adams Apple".
4. In the first few days, feel for uterine cramping when the baby is nursing properly. This helps your bleeding stop sooner and your uterus to return to normal size.
5. Feel for the tingling of "Letdown." When your milk lets down, you may have dripping or leaking from the opposite breast. This is more visible after the 4th day when milk is fully in. If you haven't felt this, be sure to relax and take a few breaths after you get the latch. Stress inhibits Letdown! That is the big kink in this process! What new mom is well rested and stress free??!!! Another sign of letdown is the baby may choke on your breastmilk. A letdown is like turning on the faucet. You can see the difference during pumping. At first when you pump you may have drips, but when you get a Letdown, you get jet streams of milk for 5-10 different streams! Pumping can help you to learn how to get a Letdown.
6. Around Day 2 your milk should be changing over from Colostrum to mature whiter milk. You can see this if you express milk. Self expression is a very good skill that will help your milk to come in
7. Around Day 3-4 your milk should be coming in. You may feel your breasts getting dense knots and getting fuller.
8. Lightening - At this point the breast feels lighter after feeding. The breast goes from tight and full to softer and flatter. This way you know the milk came out - the baby got milk!
9. Poops and Pees - Breastmilk stimulates the gut more than formula. By the fourth day, your baby should be having 4 stools a day. By the 4<sup>th</sup> day, the stools should be changing over from meconium to brown, then green, then mustardy yellow with curds.
10. Seeing milk in the baby's mouth or spitup is a good sign.
11. The baby is satisfied for 2-3 hours between feedings. This is difficult because some babies cry a lot. It never hurts to nurse if you aren't sure why they are crying.
12. Weight Gain - of course, the ultimate sign is the baby's weight gain. We expect the baby to regain birth weight by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week. Then they should gain 1-2 pounds a month.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS IN TENNESSEE?**

In TN your rights to breastfeed in public are protected. Certainly, it is possible to breastfeed in public without anyone seeing anything. All you need is a thin receiving blanket over one shoulder.

In TN your employer has to give you time to pump if you wish to return to work and continue breastfeeding. They are required to give you a place to pump that is NOT a bathroom.