



مؤسسة الرعاية الصحية الأولية
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CORPORATION

Breastfeeding between Myths and Facts





Myth: Breastfeeding is too difficult and painful!

Fact

Breastfeeding is an old practice. We have simply lost the skill but with support and knowledge, almost all women can breastfeed. Breastfeeding needs a little patience at first. Once you understand the principle of breastfeeding, you will be able to feed your baby in any position. Do not feel shy to ask for support.

Myth: Breastfeeding makes my breasts look saggy!

Fact

This isn't true. When a woman becomes pregnant, the hormones involved in sustaining her pregnancy cause changes within her breasts. Therefore, it is not breastfeeding that alters breast shape and size; it is pregnancy. It is recommended the woman to wear a nursing bra to support breasts during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Myth: Bigger breasts produce more milk!

Fact

All sizes and shapes of breasts can produce enough milk. Your body can adjust to your baby's needs if you continue breastfeeding properly throughout the day and on your baby's demand.



Myth: Not all shapes and sizes of nipples are fine for breastfeeding!

Fact

Mothers with flat or inverted nipples (folded inwards) often think they cannot breast-feed, but babies feed from a mouthful of areola (the dark pigmented area that surrounds the nipple) not from the nipple itself. With good support and assistance, most mothers are able to breastfeed. Do not be embarrassed to ask for support.

Myth: There is no difference between a formula-fed and a breast-fed baby!

Fact

This isn't true, breastfed babies are fitter, they have a higher level of immunity and they are at lower risk of developing some diseases such as eczema and diabetes. Research has also shown that they have better cognitive development at preschool age than formula-fed babies. Evidence suggests that formula-fed babies are chubbier at one year of age but the weight they gain is not healthy and they are subsequently at risk of obesity later in life.



Myth: Breast milk in the first few days after delivery isn't good and isn't enough for my baby!

Fact

In the first few days after delivery, your breast produce a yellowish, thick fluid called colostrum. It is rich in nutrients, antibodies, and all that your baby needs. Your baby's stomach a day after delivery is the size of a cherry and increases to the size of an apricot within a week to the size of a large egg within 2 weeks.

In general, a baby should nurse 8 to 12 times in a 24-hour period for the first few days to weeks.

Myth: Formula-fed babies sleep better and longer!

Fact

Research shows that formula-fed babies may sleep for longer periods but they don't have a better quality of sleep than breastfed babies. Formula milk is harder to digest and remains in your baby's stomach for a long time, so it begins to ferment - which mean you will have much smellier and bulkier nappies.

Breastfed babies typically begin to sleep for longer periods after four to six weeks of life and at this time, very much like formula-fed babies. Each baby has its unique pattern of wakefulness, depending upon its need for feeding and comfort. Some formula-fed babies may also feed frequently and on demand.



Myth: My breasts don't have enough milk for my baby!

Fact

Many mothers worry that they don't have enough milk because their breasts feel soft. After a few weeks from birth, your milk supply will adjust to your baby's needs according to the feeding frequency during the day and night. As your baby grows, his/her suckling changes from shallow and quick, to slow, deeper and more rhythmic suckling.

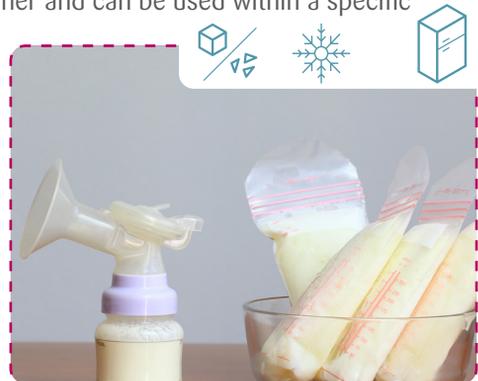
Myth: You have to be available all the time - breast milk cannot be stored!

Fact

Expressed breast milk is safe in sterile container and can be used within a specific timeframe depending on the storing place:

Expressed breast milk can be kept:

- At room temperature in a sterile container for 6-8 hours.
- In a fridge (4-10 degrees centigrade) for 48 hours on the middle shelf.
- In a fridge (less than 4 degrees centigrade) for 5-8 days.
- In a freezer for 3 months or in a deep freezer for 6 months.



Points you need to remember while storing breast milk:



01-10

Make sure you label the date



Avoid using the microwave to heat a bottle of breast milk as excess heat can destroy the nutrient quality of expressed milk



It is best to defrost frozen milk slowly in the fridge and prior to use, you can warm it by putting it in a jug of warm water or holding it under running warm water. Remember, once it's defrosted, use it straightaway.



Do not re-freeze breastmilk once it has been thawed. Remember thawed frozen milk needs to be used immediately and throw away any unused milk.

Myth: Breastfeeding makes the mother gain more weight!

Fact

This isn't true. A breastfeeding mother burns about 300 to 500 extra calories a day through breastfeeding. Losing the extra weight gained in pregnancy can be easier if you eat healthy and balanced food.

Myth: Exercising changes the taste of breast milk and makes it sour!

Fact

Studies have shown that exercising does not change the taste of your breast milk. However, make sure you shower after exercise because the taste of salty sweat on your skin can cause the baby to refuse feeding.



Myth: A breastfed baby needs to have water occasionally!

Fact

An exclusively breastfed baby does not need water, because 88% of breast milk is water and your baby will not be thirsty as long as he/she is allowed to nurse as needed.

Myth: If you breastfeed, you will not become pregnant!

Fact

Breastfeeding is a natural contraception method, only for the first six months after birth considering no food, no water and no herbal drinks are given to your baby besides breastmilk.







After six months, you start feeding your baby complementary foods, so its contraceptive effect decreases. Make sure you consult your doctor about contraception/family planning.



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