

Breastfeeding

The first few days

The first few days after your baby is born are when you learn how to get your baby on the breast. This is called attachment (see below for more information).

The midwives on the Maternity Unit are there to help you to get good attachment.

Babies need to take a good amount of breast tissue into their mouth to get good attachment, and to try and help feeding be comfortable for you. Take the time to learn how to attach your baby to the breast correctly. This will help you feel more confident to breastfeed once you are home.

Your breasts will change after birth as they prepare for feeding your baby. They are soft in the first few days while you produce colostrum. As your milk comes in your breasts will change.

It is important during this time that your baby is offered breastfeeds as often as they demand it. Every baby is different. Your midwife will help you recognise when your baby needs to feed.

Ways to achieve good positioning and attachment

How to start

Hold baby close to you so their body is facing you. Their mouth needs to be next to your nipple.

Point your nipple towards baby's nose and tickle their bottom lip with the edge of the areola until their mouth opens wide.

Bring baby into your breast with your hand behind their shoulders.

What does good attachment look like?

When attached well, baby's lips are turned outwards and their chin is well into your breast, leaving their nose clear.

It is normal to feel some tenderness for the first 6-8 sucks. This is when baby is stretching your nipple to the back of their mouth. After this, the feed should feel comfortable – not painful.

Your baby will have rhythmic sucking with well-rounded cheeks and you should hear swallowing.

Your nipple may be stretched out at the end of a feed but will still be a good shape and colour.

[For more information about positioning and attachment](#)

Ask for help - in hospital

Remember your midwife will be there to help guide you and answer any of your questions.

Ask for help – at home

Call the Breastfeeding Helpline on 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268)

Call the Parent Line on 1300 808 178

Book an appointment with your local Child and Family Health Nurse, call 1300 064 544