

# BREASTFEEDING

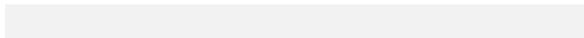
## Description



### Why breastfeed?

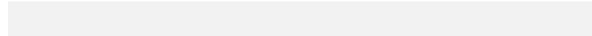
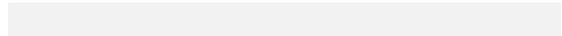
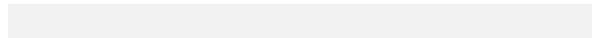
It is recommended to exclusively breastfeed an infant for the first 6 months of life, and to continue breastfeeding until the child is 2 years old or more while introducing complementary foods.

#### *Discover the benefits of breastfeeding*



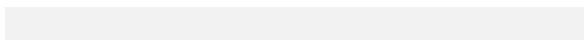
#### *For your baby:*

- provides a unique diet adapted to the baby's needs;
- reduces risks of infections;
- reduces risks of sudden infant death syndrome;
- reduces risks of necrotizing enterocolitis in premature babies.



#### *For the mom:*

- reduces risks of breast and ovarian cancers;
- reduces risks of hypertension;
- delays the return of periods;
- is an option that requires little preparation;
- is an inexpensive way to feed your baby.



#### *For the environment and society:*

- is a local and sustainable food;
- does not generate pollution related to production, transportation and packaging;
- helps reduce healthcare costs

## Preparing to breastfeed

Breastfeeding is a new experience for you and your baby. Give yourself time to become familiar with the art of breastfeeding.

### **The best tips and tricks to prepare for breastfeeding:**

- **Talk about your breastfeeding project** with your partner, family and friends, and a health professional
- **Participate in prenatal sessions** given at your CLSC

- **See the information:**
  - [From Tiny Tot to Toddler guide, sections on Feeding your baby and Breastfeeding](#)
  - Watch information videos
- **Find out about breastfeeding** resources such as support groups and volunteers
- **Make plans to have a source of support** to assist you

## From Tiny Tot to Toddler guide

A practical guide that contains scientifically supported information about pregnancy, delivery and the first two years of a child's life.

- [See the guide for more information.](#)

## Support is important

You can offer support to a nursing mother. Whether you're her life partner, relative, neighbour or friend, you can play an important role. Ask parents what would be most helpful.

### Ways to support a breastfeeding mother:

- **Listen.** Remember that it's important just to be there and offer emotional support and encouragement during difficult moments.
- **Make sure that mom is comfortable.** For example, go get the baby during the night, help the mother settle in to breastfeed, bring her water and a snack. These small gestures are invaluable!
- **Go with the mother to her appointments.** A second pair of ears to listen carefully to a professional's advice can be very useful. When you get home, it can be helpful to talk over some of the information together.
- **Get involved in taking care of the baby.** For example, rock the baby, sing songs, give the infant a bath or gentle massage, take the baby for a walk, hold the child skin-to-skin, change the diapers, and help with household chores.
- **Support the mother's choices to care for the baby.** The baby's parents are in the best position to know what the child needs.

## What parents have said

Breastfeeding can be challenging. Each family's situations and stories are different. In this video, from [CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal \(Montréal West Island IUHSSC\)](#), you'll hear parents talk about the importance of support.

If this video raises questions or concerns, contact your CLSC to talk to a professional.

## Answers to frequently asked questions

### Q.: What should I expect after childbirth?

A.: Skin-to-skin contact with your newborn usually starts at birth. The first contact helps keep the baby warm and get used to the new environment. For the mother, this first contact releases the hormones needed to get the milk flowing. Usually, in the first hour following delivery, your baby shows signs of being ready to nurse. Let the baby move toward the breast and begin to suckle. The team at the birthing centre will be there for you.

### Q.: Am I producing enough milk?

A.: This is a common concern. And yet, most mothers produce enough milk. It's essential to learn to recognize the signs that indicate your milk is transferring to the baby. The signs are as follows: the baby wakes up on his or her own when hungry, feeds often, has a good amount of urine and stools, seems satisfied after feeding, gains weight.

**Q.: Does my own diet change the quality or amount of milk I produce?**

A.: Diet has little effect on maternal milk, except in specific cases. The mother's body prioritizes producing milk that is adapted to the baby's needs.

**Q.: How do I know my baby wants to feed?**

A.: The baby's breathing accelerates, eyes move beneath the eyelids, mouth opens, arms and legs move, the infant brings their hands to their mouth or face, makes sucking motions, moves the head from side to side, or cries.

**Q.: How long should the baby nurse?**

A.: It depends! No one likes to feel rushed when eating a meal. The same goes for babies. It is recommended to let the baby decide how long the meal lasts. The time for feeding can vary from 15 minutes to an hour and a half, depending on the infant's age, time of day and many other factors.

**Q.: How long does it take for my breasts to fill back up after breastfeeding?**

A.: Mother's milk is always available; the breasts never empty completely. There is no need to wait between feedings.

**Q.: How do I know if a breastfeeding problem is normal or requires professional help?**

A.: Contact a professional if you're worried or discouraged, feel pain or are thinking of weaning your baby because you feel overwhelmed. Here are a few examples:

- Difficulty getting the baby to latch on
- Pain or lesions on the nipples or breasts
- Baby not gaining enough weight
- Problems with milk production

## Usefull links

### Practical guide

To find out which resources are available in your area, see [Nourri-Source Montréal's practical guide](#) (in French).

**To find support:**

- [Nourri-source Montréal](#)
- [Ligue La Leche](#)
- [Professionnel de la santé du CLSC](#)
- [Consultantes en lactation IBCLC](#)
- [Alimentation des bébés et des nourrissons](#)

**Videos on breastfeeding:**

- [Fondation Olo](#)
- [Dispensaire diététique de Montréal](#)
- [Global Health Media](#)
- [CHU Ste-Justine](#)

**Information about breastfeeding in public places:**

- [Nourri-source : La Route du lait](#)
- [Mouvement Allaitement Québec](#)