

MAMMA'S MILK

good for baby, good for you
and always ready



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PIANOTERRA non-profit organisation

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This is a short guide for new mums, with useful suggestions to help you breastfeed your baby. Breast milk is very important for the health and well-being of mother and baby, so it's a good idea to prepare for breastfeeding by learning something about it in advance: from the moment when your baby is born you will have lots of new things to deal with, so it is best to start thinking about it even before your baby is born so that you get off to a good start.

It is normal to come up against some challenges when breastfeeding, if ever you need help you can turn to healthcare workers, paediatricians, family health clinics, or the hospital or clinic where your baby is born and also to our organisation, Pianoterra.

WITH BEST WISHES FROM THE PIANOTERRA TEAM!



WHY BREASTFEED?

Good for baby, good for mum!

Breast milk is excellent nourishment for your baby. Breastfeeding helps create a **special bond between you and your baby**, but whichever method you choose, feeding your baby is a gesture of love. Breastfeeding is the most natural way to keep bonding with your baby after the pregnancy.

Breastfeeding is good for mothers too, because, among other things, it **helps the uterus to contract**, decreasing blood loss after birth.

BREAST MILK

- is a **living fluid** that changes to adapt to your child's needs over the course of the feed, over the course of the day and as your child grows;
- is **unique: it is the food** which nature intended for your child;
- contains **all the necessary substances** for your child's growth in the first 6 months: during this time they need nothing else (not even water);
- **protects your child from infection** during the first year of life

Moreover, it is really practical and cheap: always sterile, easily digested and, most importantly, it's free!

Will I be able to breastfeed?

Many mums-to-be worry about not being able to breastfeed. The majority of women are able to breastfeed and all breasts can do it, even the smallest, regardless of size.

Breast milk is produced during pregnancy and, from just a few hours after birth, your baby stimulates milk production by suckling. Breast milk is produced through a simple cycle:

when attached correctly, the more your baby feeds, the more milk you will produce. Some babies have a strong suck, but others can be sleepier, and need more encouragement.

It is important to allow time for mum and baby to bond, and to learn together.



If I can't breastfeed...

This can happen, and it's no one's fault! Your baby will grow just as well with formula milk. The most important thing is to be loving and to hold your baby close while feeding: **more than anything your baby needs a parent who is relaxed and not stressed!**

THE GOLDEN RULES

When and how often do I need to breastfeed?

WHEN DO I NEED TO BREASTFEED?



AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, STRAIGHT AWAY AFTER THE BIRTH! The first few hours after birth are the perfect time for your baby to attach and begin sucking correctly. Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth helps babies find the breast, and helps **build a strong bond**. Sadly, not all maternity units allow new mums to keep their baby by their side. However, **it is your right to refuse formula feeds or top-ups**. (If medical staff want to give your baby glucose solution, make sure you understand the reason why, before you give your consent.)

In the first few days after birth your baby may not take much from the breast, so it is important to keep them close and encourage them to feed.

Don't rush things - with time your baby will get the hang of it.

WILL I NEED TO TOP UP WITH FORMULA MILK?



NO, IT'S NOT NECESSARY! At first your breasts produce a substance called **colostrum** which is yellow and is packed with antibodies, proteins, minerals and other substances which help your baby grow and develop.

Colostrum is more than enough for your baby, and, if there are no other issues, no other liquids are necessary, not even water. **In the first few days babies don't need big amounts of food** (their stomachs are only as big as a cherry) and small amounts of colostrum are all your baby will need.

It is best to avoid pacifiers (dummies) and baby-bottles, especially when beginning to breastfeed and for your baby's first month.

HOW MANY TIMES A DAY DO I NEED TO BREASTFEED?



LISTEN TO YOUR BABY, FOLLOW YOUR BABY'S LEAD. There is no fixed number of feeds: most newborn babies feed from **8 to 12 times over 24 hours**.

Your baby will let you know when they want to feed **with these signs**:

- moving their head from side to side
- sucking their fists
- opening their mouth and sticking their tongue out
- In time you will learn your baby's signals and body language.

At night keep your baby's cot nearby so you can breastfeed when your baby gets hungry. Try to avoid too much light or noise.

HOW LONG SHOULD A FEED LAST?



THERE ARE NO STRICT RULES. The length of a feed varies from child to child and from feed to feed, there is no set amount of time and it will change as your child grows.

Don't worry about long feeds, if the attachment is correct then you won't get **cracked nipples**.

Let your baby feed from one breast until they come off it spontaneously, you can then try to offer the other breast; sometimes they will take it other times they won't.

POSITIONING AND ATTACHMENT

Comfortable mum, and a comfortable baby!

After the birth you can begin your first feed leaning back (semirecumbent); this position can be helpful for the first feeds or if your baby has trouble attaching and your nipples are sore. Once feeding is established you can do it in all kinds of different positions **the important thing is that you are comfortable and can support your baby!**

MOTHER'S POSITION



SEMI-RECUMBENT: lying down but not completely flat, with your back supported by a cushion, so you're comfortable and relaxed. Lay your baby onto you, tummy-to-tummy with their nose and mouth free and pointing towards the nipple.

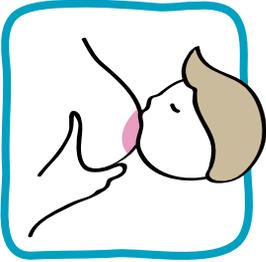


SITTING: hold your baby in your arms, supporting their shoulders and holding their head with your fingers. Your baby's body should be straight and turned towards you (tummy-to-tummy).



LYING DOWN: lie on your side holding your baby in front of you and supporting the shoulders. This is a very comfortable position even in hospital after a Caesarean section or if you find it uncomfortable to sit in the first few days after birth.

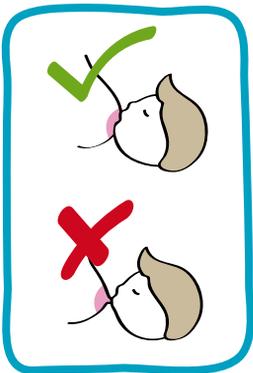
BABY'S POSITION



- Your baby's **body** should be turned towards you (tummy-to-tummy) as close as possible.
- **Nose** should be in front of your nipple.
- Your baby's **mouth** should be pointed towards your nipple and will be ready to attach when their mouth is wide open with their tongue sticking out.
- **Chin** should be touching your breast.

You can help by holding your breast in a **C shape with your hand** with your thumb on top of your areola and the other fingers under your breast and by tickling their nose with your nipple. Bring your baby to your breast not your breast to your baby and don't force your baby to open their mouth, if they're hungry they will do it automatically.

A GOOD ATTACHMENT



- When feeding, **most of the nipple and breast should be in your baby's mouth** (there is usually more areola visible above their mouth than below).
- **Chin should always be touching the breast.**
- **The lower lip should be curled outwards.**

Once your baby is attached properly they will start sucking the milk: at first they will have a strong suck, then they will have a break, and after that they will start sucking again. Your baby's cheeks should look full and the sucking will gradually become slower and deeper.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Any doubts or worries?

IS BREASTFEEDING PAINFUL?

BREASTFEEDING SHOULD BE A PLEASANT AND REWARDING FEELING. However, especially in the first few days, some mums can have some pain and sore nipples especially at the beginning of a feed. This may happen because your baby hasn't attached correctly and you could try taking them off and trying again. If your baby doesn't open their mouth wide and only sucks on the nipple and not the whole of the areola little milk will come out and you could get cracked nipples; again it is a good idea to take you baby off the breast and try again. To help with sore and cracked nipples you can apply some of your own breast milk to your nipples and let it dry. This is usually the best solution, without the need for disinfectants or creams.

WILL I HAVE ENOUGH MILK?

IF YOUR BABY IS GROWING, THEN YOUR MILK IS MORE THAN ENOUGH. The first few days after birth your baby will lose some weight but shouldn't lose more than 10% of their birth weight (eg. if your baby weighs 4kg or 4.000 grams when born, they should not lose more than 400 grams in the first few days). By the way, this weight loss is defined 'physiological', which means that is normal and to be expected. After the initial weight loss your baby should start gaining weight again and go over their birth weight after the first 10-15 days. If they have around 6 wees (or wet nappies) a day and around 3 dirty nappies a day then they are getting plenty of milk.

In the first 2-3 months of life your baby should gain 15-20 grams each day; weight can be checked once a week. **Remember that every child is different and grows at a different pace.** There may be some periods with **growth spurts**; during this time your baby will appear hungrier and you might feel like your milk is not enough. Feed whenever your baby is hungry and your milk supply will adapt to your child's needs.

If there is a need to increase the amount of milk your baby takes, you can encourage feeding more regularly and for longer periods of time, and in 24-48 hours' time, you should have

more milk. A relaxed environment and a comfortable position can also help with your feeding. **In the first 6 weeks after giving birth, mums need to rest, eat healthily and have plenty of physical and emotional support.**

WHAT KIND OF FOOD SHOULD A BREASTFEEDING MUM EAT?

EAT AS YOU USED TO, FOLLOWING A HEALTHY AND WELL-BALANCED DIET. Don't drink too much coffee or alcohol. Try not to smoke, and especially never smoke around your child and avoid other people smoking around them too.

HOW CAN I BREASTFEED MY BABY WHEN I GO BACK TO WORK?

YOU CAN STILL BREASTFEED ONCE YOU START WORKING AGAIN. . If you can't breastfeed your child all the time, you can learn how to hand-express or you can use a **breast pump (manual or electric)**. Ask for help from healthcare professionals to teach you how. You can also get information and help from us at **Pianoterra**. Hand-expressed and pumped milk can be kept at room temperature for 6-8 hours in the fridge for up to 72 hours, or in the freezer for up to 3 months and you can leave it out to defrost or place the container in boiling water.



If you are a WORKING MUM you should be aware of your rights and entitlements during your child's first year of life.

You can find more information on this website: www.inps.it

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MILK, OR I CAN'T BREASTFEED?

ASK FOR ADVICE AND HELP FROM YOUR PAEDIATRICIAN. If your milk is not enough for your child's growth, you can top up your feeds with formula milk. Always offer your breast first and then the formula: even just a small amount of breast milk gives antibodies to your child and helps strengthen your bond.

If you simply cannot breastfeed, you can turn to formula milk which will meet your child's growth needs.

Hold your baby close when you're bottle-feeding with formula, smile and cuddle them just as you would if breastfeeding.

USEFUL WORDS

AREOLA (areola mammaria)

It's the round area around your nipple, it is usually a darker colour compared to the rest of the breast. It contains glands which lubricate the area and help your baby to suck.

BREAST MILK (latte materno)

The mother's milk is the best food for a baby from birth and during the first year. It contains all the essential nutrients (proteins, fats, sugars) in the right quantities for a baby's growth.

BIRTH (parto)

When your baby enters the world. It can happen naturally, that is vaginally, or through elective or emergency Caesarean section (a cut to your abdomen).

BIRTHPLACE (Punto Nascita)

It is a healthcare structure specializing in pregnant and birthing women.

BREAST PUMP (tiralatte)

It is a manual or electric device used on the breast to extract milk. It is used when a mother can't breastfeed her child, or in order to increase milk production.

COLOSTRUM (colostro)

A thick yellow liquid, packed with antibodies and nutrition. It is produced during pregnancy and in the first 5-6 days after birth. It helps protect the baby in the first few months of life.

CRACKED NIPPLES (ragadi)

These are fissures or small cuts of the nipple and the aureola. Generally they are caused by an incorrect breastfeeding position, and your baby not being properly attached to the breast which means suction of the nipple is superficial.

FAMILY HEALTH CLINIC (consultorio familiare)

A health clinic which is part of A.S.L. = Azienda Sanitaria Locale which means local health service. The family health clinic helps and supports families or individuals who request assistance in the field of mother-child healthcare and family planning. All services are for free.

FEED (poppata)

A newborn baby will want to feed frequently, so there are no fixed rules about how long or how often for a breastfed baby (this is called feeding on request = allattamento a richiesta). If the baby takes formula milk (artificial milk) it is necessary to follow the pediatrician's guidance and advice about the frequency of feeds and how much milk to give.

FORMULA MILK (latte formulato)

È stato creato, in polvere o liquido, per integrare il latte materno se insufficiente o per sostituirlo quando la mamma non può allattare.

MINERALS (sali minerali)

Mineral salts are indispensable for development of tissues and organs, and for maintaining the right balance of fluids and salts in the body. They are contained in many different foods (milk and dairy products, pulses, fruit and vegetables).

NEWBORN BABY WEIGHT LOSS (calo fisiologico)

This is a baby's normal loss of weight in the first few days of life. All babies have this "weight loss". Due to the loss of liquid, as urine pee and the first faeces (poo) which is called **meconium** (and can be very dark).

NIPPLE (capezzolo)

The dark bump in the middle of the areola; milk comes out of here.

PROTEINS (proteine)

These are nutritious substances, essential for growth and regeneration of cells.

SKIN TO SKIN CONTACT (contatto "pelle a pelle")

This means holding baby on your naked chest, especially immediately after birth. It helps create a bond between you and your baby, keeping your baby warm and preparing for breastfeeding.

SUCTION (suzione)

The suction reflex is present from birth to allow your baby to feed. Every newborn has their own 'style' of sucking which may be more or less energetic.

USEFUL WEB-SITES

www.allattamentoibclc.it
www.consulenteallattamento.it
www.nostrofiglio.it
www.pourfemme.it
www.bambinonaturale.it
www.lilitalia.org
www.mami.org
www.vocidibimbi.it

The law and your rights

www.inps.it
www.pariopportunita.gov.it
www.salute.gov.it
www.wikilabour.it

Napoli

www.comune.napoli.it
www.aslnapoli1centro.it
www.aslnapoli2nordservizionline.it
www.aslnapoli3sud.it
www.cittametropolitana.na.it

Roma

www.comune.roma.it
www.aslrmc.com
www.asplazio.it
www.bussolasanita.it
www.consultaconsultoriroma.blogspot.it

www.pianoterra.net

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GIORNI

PIANO TERRA

from pregnancy
through the first 3 years
of your child's life



CENTRE FOR WOMEN, PARENTS AND FAMILY GROUPS



meeting point and advice for and by parents



practical help in caring for your child



putting you in contact with the services you need
(ASL = local state health service, hospitals, local council authorities,
other associations, cooperatives etc.)



meetings with mother and baby healthcare specialists
(pediatricians, gynecologists etc.)



play space and workshops for mums and babies

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PIANOTERRA non-profit organisation

Pianoterra non-profit organisation started in 2008 to help & support families in need. Pianoterra staff work closely with expectant mothers and new mothers to meet their needs in diverse ways: free equipment for material needs; putting families in touch with local health services; individual consultations; group workshops with health & well-being experts, and much more.

Come to Pianoterra for an appointment for an individual consultation: we will propose a personalized pathway to support you, taking into account your personal needs and situation.

Pianoterra sets out a **Pact of reciprocal commitment and responsibility collaboration** with every client, to foster the well-being of mother, child and the whole family.

Also active in Rome since 2013.

Areas of intervention

- Birth and maternity
- Autonomy and empowerment
- Education