



NUTRITION TIPS

Building Closeness By Breast Feeding



When women look back on the time they spent breastfeeding their babies, what they remember most is the intimacy of feeding a baby at the breast.

Whether you're someone who is swept away by the romance of motherhood or a more practical person who feels that the milk is there for a reason, the feeling of satisfying your baby's hunger with your own milk will strike you as very fulfilling.

When you chose to breast feed, you continue "the oneness" that you and your baby experienced during pregnancy. Your body continues to provide nourishment, warmth, comfort and safety, just as it did when your baby was inside you. Breast milk is convenient food available for baby within seconds wherever you go, without the stress of sterilizing bottles and nipples or the effort of preparing the formula. Breastfeeding is an important step in building a trusting relationship that extends well beyond the baby years.

Is Your Baby Latching On And Sucking Efficiently?

Correct breastfeeding starts with proper latch-on, which puts most of the mother's areola into the baby's mouth, with nipple to mouth. The baby's gums compress the milk sinuses that lie about an inch behind the nipple. The tongue is forward, underneath the breast, over the lower gum, and its motion helps baby draw out milk. When the baby is not latched on securely to the areola, the painful sensations in your nipples will register. Take your baby off and start again. Be sure that you wait until baby's mouth is wide open and the tongue is down and forward before pulling baby onto the breast. Be patient, calm baby down, and stay calm. It takes a week or two for most mothers and babies to become skilled at breast feeding.



How To Get Baby To Open Her Mouth Wide

When the nipple touches baby's lips, her mouth will open quickly, seeking the breast. Get your nipple into her mouth when it is as wide an open as possible so that baby sucks on a good mouthful of breast tissue, not just on the ribbing of your nipple. Baby's wide-

open mouth is the most important part of latch-on. Use your nipple to tickle baby's lower lip to encourage her to open her mouth wide, really wide.

As the mouth opens to its wide point, direct your nipple into the centre and use your arm behind to pull baby in very close to you. Don't lean forward, pushing your breast towards your baby. Pull her close to your breast by moving your arm.

What To Do If You Can't Seem To Get It Right

There's a right way and a wrong way for baby to latch onto the breast but latch-on and sucking can usually be fixed within a few days. The easiest way to learn about latch-on is in a one-on-one session with a knowledgeable expert who can show you, how to get baby latched on correctly.

When baby latches on correctly, mother's nipples don't get sore and baby is able to get plenty of milk.

If you're having trouble latching your baby onto the breast or feel that your baby is not sucking well, talk to an expert.



* For more information on child nutrition

Visit the Olu Akinkugbe Foundation
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Visiting Hours:
10:00 am - 12 noon and 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm.
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