

Lactation: How to Support a Breastfeeding Mom

Breastfeeding is an extremely important job for a mom; it takes lots of time and emotional energy and can be really hard at times. Having the support of a partner, family member or friend can help mom focus on doing her best to learn how to breastfeed, a skill that takes time to learn. Here are some ideas to support a breastfeeding mom.

To Learn More

- Lactation Services
206-987-1420
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

1. Watch baby for early feeding cues (sucking their fists, licking lips, wiggling around) and get baby ready for breastfeeding: change their diaper, talk gently to babe, pick baby up and bring to mom.
2. If babe is fussy just before feeding, try to calm baby before bringing to mom by swaying or gently moving while holding baby.
3. Help mom by getting her a pillow in place on her lap, and placing baby on the side mom is ready to feed on; help mom get her arms and baby into a comfortable position.
4. Help mom keep baby awake and alert and sucking at the breast – tickle baby's toes, gently rub their torso.
5. When baby is done nursing on the first side, help mom bring baby into a burping position (or you burp the baby), then help get baby into position for the second side.
6. When babe is done nursing, offer to hold baby. Suggest that mom sleep whenever baby sleeps.
7. Remind mom and baby that breastfeeding takes time and practice to learn and that it gets easier over time.
8. Bring mom a snack and some water while she's breastfeeding. Feed it to her if her hands are busy.
9. Take care of household tasks and food, other children and guests so that mom can focus on breastfeeding.
10. Be there to listen to how mom is feeling and encourage her. Tell her she is doing a great job and help to remind her why she chose to breastfeed.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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