

Infant Feeding

- ✓ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of an infant's life and continued breastfeeding for at least the first year.
- ✓ Any amount of breastfeeding has benefits for both you and your baby.
- ✓ Hold your newborn skin to skin often throughout the day! (Skin to skin means holding your baby wearing just a diaper up against your bare chest.) Research shows that these babies cry less, are calmer, have increased brain development and nurse better!
- ✓ If nursing, avoid pacifiers, formula, bottles and pumping of breast milk for the first month unless medically indicated or if you are separated from your infant. Pumping is not a good way to measure how much breast milk is being produced. A pump cannot get all the milk out of a mother's breast.
- ✓ The best way to see if your baby is getting enough breast milk is by weight gain and the number of wet and dirty diapers your baby is producing.
- ✓ Infants go through a growth spurt between 10-14 days, 5-6 weeks, 3 months and at 4 months. During growth spurts, babies often become very fussy and want to eat more often than expected. A growth spurt can last up to a week! If nursed on cue, a mother will make all the milk her baby needs.
- ✓ Breastfed babies usually gain about an ounce a day after the first few days of birth and are back up to birth weight by 2-3 weeks.
- ✓ Mothers make breast milk called *colostrum* during the first 3-5 days after birth. This nutrient rich form of breast milk is all a newborn needs!

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Suggestions if bottle feeding

- ✓ Hold your baby when feeding. Never leave your baby unattended while he/she is eating.
- ✓ Hold your baby at breast level when feeding. Your baby can see your face clearest at that distance.
- ✓ Whether breast or bottle feeding, change sides you feed the baby on after burping baby. This allows both of your baby's eyes to get stimulated.
- ✓ To see the flow of a bottle nipple, turn the bottle upside down and see how the breast milk or formula comes out. If it is a stream or a very quick drip, this is too high of a flow for a newborn. A slower rate of flow causes less chance for choking or overfeeding.
- ✓ *Generally, if preparing powder formula; add the water before formula to the bottle. This allows for accurate measuring of water in bottle. Always use the scoop that comes in the formula can to measure formula. Incorrect mixing can lead to an improper balance of nutrients, overfeeding and constipation. **Always follow the directions for mixing formula as written on the formula can. Mixing instructions may vary.**