

# BREASTFEEDING

## Protect your baby's health!

Under current circumstances protecting your baby's health is more important than ever. Breastfeeding helps to keep your baby as healthy as possible.

### Benefits of breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is safer than formula or other foods, it protects against infections, diarrhoea and dehydration and it ensures proper development for your baby. Breastmilk is always available unlike formula. Moreover, formula powder, sterile hot water, sterile baby bottles and measuring cups are also needed.

You can breastfeed anywhere even when on the move, while to prepare formula you have to stop and you also need to carry the formula and its necessary preparation equipment with you.

Breastfeeding keeps your baby warm with your closeness resulting in your breastfed babies are safer than babies fed otherwise.

### How to keep up your milk supply?

If the mother lacks food or drink, breastmilk is still produced. After stopping breastfeeding breastmilk is still produced throughout months, so you can start breastfeeding again even after weaning the baby.

Breastfeed up to 8-10 times or more per day. If the baby breastfeeds less frequently, the milk supply decreases.

Watch your baby's signs for hunger: head turning to look for the breast, sucking on hands or lip smacking, opening and closing mouth. Let him/her breastfeed for as long as he wants. You can breastfeed even if he is sleepy and feed him during nights as well. Avoid pacifiers and bottles if possible.

### How to breastfeed? How to provide calm, safe and warm place for your baby?

Under the current situation, it is not always possible to breastfeed without being disturbed. You should not worry about it. You can breastfeed practically anywhere. The point is to provide a calm and warm place for your baby. You can breastfeed while sitting on the floor, leaning your back against a wall, pillar or tree, pulling up your knees, turning your baby towards you and pulling him close to you. If you are breastfeeding while lying down, the baby should lay on his side close to you. Even when carrying your baby in a sling or carrier, babies can calmly breastfeed on the go. Your body will warm the baby.

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### Your baby needs other food than breastmilk, but when?

Until the age of 6 months babies need nothing but breastmilk. Even after 6 months your baby's most source of energy and nutrients is breastmilk. It is absolutely fine to only breastfeed for a few months if no other safe food is available. Until the age of six weeks, 5-6 wet and one dirty diaper per day indicate that there is enough breastmilk. Later, babies urinate less frequently but with more urine and have fewer stools. If everything goes well, the urine is colourless or a little bit yellowish. If the baby is thirsty, its urine is darker. A swollen soft spot is not the sign of not getting enough milk. If you are worried about your baby, ask for medical help available.

### How to give formula or baby food to your baby?

Babies might not like breastfeeding if they are given bottles or pacifiers. That is why it is better to give food by using a small cup which you can clean easily.

If it is necessary you can give baby food from the age of 5 months by using a spoon if baby formula is not available. You should keep it in mind if the baby gets too much food other than breastmilk, he or she will breastfeed less and the amount of your breastmilk will be less too. Please, continue to breastfeed your baby as many times as you can. Moreover, since breastfeeding is not just about feeding but it is for comforting as well. Breastfeed the baby after giving her baby food or formula. Then she will feel fullness and will be calmed down. So breastfeeding for comfort is a feeling of complete fullness and relaxation, which will be associated with breastfeeding.

### Have you already stopped breastfeeding for a long time? You can start it again. Here is how:

1. If your baby accepts breasts:

- Breastfeed often, even if you do not have milk yet.
- Always breastfeed when you see signs of hunger: opening and closing mouth, sucking his hands, licking his lips.
- Breastfeed your baby even if s/he is sleepy and wants to sleep.
- Use a cup if you need to give the baby formula.
- Do not give him/her a baby bottle or a pacifier.

2. If your baby does not want to accept your breast and protests:

- Try gently breastfeeding him without forcing it.
- Use a clean cup to give him/her baby food or formula.
- Do not give him/her a baby bottle or a pacifier.
- Rock him/her a lot, put him in a carrier and walk with him.
- Try to breastfeed when the baby is calm, sleepy or has just woken up.

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Myth	Fact	What can you do?
<b>If the mother lacks food or drink, breastmilk is not enough</b>	If the mother lacks food or drink, breastmilk is still produced. Under severe starvation conditions there may be fluctuations in the amount of nutrients in breastmilk. In this case, however, breastfeeding is still the best choice.	Breastfeed often in response to your baby's signs of hunger. Try to get as many vegetables and fruits as possible. You can also take vitamin supplements if they are available to you.
<b>Donating formula is helpful</b>	<p>If mothers have not been breastfeeding for months, formula donations are helpful indeed. Babies need to eat, that is the golden rule.</p> <p>However, during a crisis if you notice a decrease in your milk supply or if you have not breastfed for just a few days, the support you receive to increase the amount of your breastmilk or to restart breastfeeding (relactation) is of much importance.</p> <p>There is a real danger of the fact that the more formula the baby gets the more possible she gets completely formula-fed in a short time.</p> <p>However, there will not always be donations available, consequently it is the mother who has to buy the formula.</p>	<p>All professional organizations (WHO, UNICEF) recommend that breastfeeding (and, if possible, pumping with appropriate hygienic conditions), the donation of donor milk and wet nursing should be encouraged instead of formula donations. Frequent and correct breastfeeding, not using pacifiers and baby bottles, feeding only a small amount of supplementation at a time from a small cup, a lot of body contact with the baby all help to increase the breastmilk supply.</p> <p>(wet nursing: when a baby is breastfed by another woman)</p>
<b>Stress cause low milk supply</b>	Stress itself does not make breastfeeding issues. However, it can temporarily block the production of the hormone oxytocin, which triggers the milk ejection reflex. If this persists for a long time, the amount of milk may be temporarily reduced.	Try to calm down as much as possible, relax while breastfeeding. Close your eyes, think of something pleasant, a beautiful memory, a beautiful waterfall. Or just enjoy being with your baby. Take a deep breath and blow it out slowly.
<b>If you stopped breastfeeding, you cannot restart it and it is not worth making an effort.</b>	Relactation is a process by which a mother restarts her milk production. This can be done at any time, no matter how much time has passed since then.	Breastfeed your baby as often as possible. It is good to have someone near you who can breastfeed him/her too. Until your milk production starts again, give him his formula from a clean cup, avoid using a baby bottle. If you do not use a pacifier and a bottle, it will be easier for your baby to get into mood to breastfeed again. His/her technique will be more efficient and your milk supply will increase faster.