

# Making the Right Amount of Milk



PLUS:  
10 Ways to  
Increase Your  
Milk Supply





## My mother could not make enough breastmilk for her baby. Can a low milk supply run in my family?

### How do I know if I am making enough milk?

You already know that breastfeeding is the best gift you can give your baby. It has all the nutrition and protection that your baby needs. It is natural to worry about the amount of milk you are making. The fact is, most women make plenty of milk for their baby - or babies.

Many new moms turn to their families, especially their own mothers, for breastfeeding support. Each woman is different; you may find comfort in knowing that low milk supply does not run in families. It is very likely that you will be able to make enough milk to meet your baby's needs.

SIGNS YOUR BABY IS GETTING ENOUGH BREASTMILK DURING THE FIRST MONTH:			
Day	Wet Diapers	Color of dirty diapers	Weight gain
1	Number will vary	Black, tarry	Some weight loss is normal in the first few days.
2	Number will vary	Brown, tarry	
3	3 or more	Green	
4	4 or more	Yellow	
5 to 28	6 or more	Yellow	4 - 8 oz. per week

After the first month, bowel movements may be less frequent, but your baby should appear satisfied after each feeding.



## **How does my body know how much milk my baby needs?**

Your baby tells your body how much milk he needs by how often he nurses. The more you nurse your baby or pump your breastmilk, the more milk your body makes. Listen to your baby, he knows how much milk he needs.

Nursing often helps you make more milk, so do not wait until your breasts feel full to breastfeed or pump. Waiting until your breasts feel full makes your body think that it is making too much milk. The “full” feeling tells your body to decrease milk production.

## **What if my baby cries all the time?**

Newborn babies can't tell you what they need so they cry for many reasons. It isn't always because they're hungry. Sometimes they may cry when they need to burp or if they have a dirty diaper.

Often, newborn babies cry because they need time to adjust to their new world. Bright lights, loud sounds, and visitors can be upsetting to a newborn. By keeping your baby at your breast or close to you in skin-to-skin contact, you are helping your baby adjust to his new surroundings.





The more your  
baby nurses,  
the more breastmilk  
you will make.

## Can using formula decrease my milk supply?

Yes. To make sure you have a good milk supply, do not use formula or bottles.

If you choose to offer formula in addition to breastmilk, it is best to wait until your baby is 3 - 4 weeks old. The best way to protect your milk supply is to nurse your baby often and when your baby shows early hunger cues.

## Why does it seem like my baby eats less often if I feed him formula?

Formula-fed babies do not eat as often as breastfed babies because formula is harder to digest. Breastmilk is better for your baby because it is easier to break down and absorb.

Plus, bottles have constant flow so babies have to swallow even if they are not hungry.

Offering a bottle of formula can decrease your milk supply and make it easy to overfeed your baby.



### Your baby is full when:

- You see his body relaxing.
- His fists are opened and relaxed.
- He releases your nipple and falls asleep.



## I feel like my baby wants to nurse all the time – is something wrong?

If your baby is extra fussy or wants to breastfeed more often, he may be going through a growth spurt. Babies go through several growth spurts in the first year. During a growth spurt, your baby will nurse more than usual. This is normal and it does not mean you do not have enough milk.


The first growth spurt usually occurs when babies are about two to three weeks old and then again around six weeks, three months, and six months.

You may not always notice growth spurts, but if you do, remember that they are short-lived. Be patient because most babies return to their normal feeding pattern within a few days.

### Call your doctor if your baby:

- *has fewer than six wet diapers by his sixth day of life*
- *has dirty diapers that are still a black, tarry color by the fourth day of life*
- *will not wake up to nurse at least eight times a day*
- *falls asleep or stops nursing immediately after latch-on*
- *is not gaining weight*





Remember just  
because your baby wants  
to nurse often, does not  
mean you are not making  
enough milk.

## 10 tips to increase your milk supply:

1. Breastfeed or pump more frequently – 10-12 times a day. The best way to make more milk is to empty the breasts more often.
2. Nurse your baby at the earliest signs of hunger – small movements after deep sleep, stretching, bringing hands to face, or turning head to search.
3. Massage your breasts before you nurse, when your baby is actively nursing, and when you are pumping. This helps remove more milk.
4. Have a WIC breastfeeding peer counselor or lactation consultant watch a feeding to make sure things are going well.
  - ♦ Your baby's mouth should be wide open, like a yawn, so he has a mouthful of nipple and breast.
  - ♦ Your baby should be directly facing you (chest to chest).
  - ♦ Your baby's chin should be buried in your breast.
  - ♦ Don't delay asking for help if you need it.
5. All of your baby's sucking should be at your breast. Avoid pacifiers, formula and water bottles.
6. Most babies like to nurse more frequently during one time of the day. Nurse as often as possible during this period.



7. Let your baby end the feeding by letting go of the breast or falling asleep. Then, burp him and offer the other breast.
8. Sleep close to your baby – Keep his crib or bassinet next to your bed or in the same room.
9. Take care of yourself. Sleep when your baby sleeps and make easy meals, such as soup or a sandwich.
10. Take your baby with you and nurse everywhere. Texas law protects your right to breastfeed in public.



## Who can I call for help?



If you have tried some of the tips to increase your milk supply and still feel like you are not producing enough:

- VISIT

[WWW.BREASTMILKCOUNTS.COM](http://WWW.BREASTMILKCOUNTS.COM)

- CALL YOUR LOCAL WIC OFFICE FOR BREASTFEEDING HELP

- CALL THE TEXAS LACTATION SUPPORT HOTLINE:

1-855-550-6667



To learn more about how the body makes milk,  
visit [www.breastmilkcounts.com](http://www.breastmilkcounts.com).

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