

# BREASTFEEDING BASICS FOR DADS: Your Breastfeeding Questions Answered

Breastfeeding gives your baby a healthy start in life. But it may not be easy. It takes time, practice, patience, and teamwork. Your support and encouragement are critical to breastfeeding success. Learn why breastfeeding is important and how you can be involved in every step of the breastfeeding journey.

## Why is breastfeeding the healthiest option for my baby?

- Breast milk lowers your baby's risk of certain infections and diseases, such as ear infections, asthma, and childhood obesity.
- Breast milk is easier to digest. Breastfed babies have less diarrhea, constipation, and colic.
- Breastfeeding provides important physical contact that makes your baby feel safe, secure, and loved.
- Breast milk contains vitamins, minerals, antibodies, and nutrients to help your baby grow healthy and strong.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**WIC  
BREASTFEEDING  
SUPPORT**

*LEARN TOGETHER. GROW TOGETHER.*

## What other benefits does breastfeeding provide?

- Breastfeeding is good for mom, too. It helps her recover from childbirth more quickly and may help her lose weight. It also reduces her risk for type 2 diabetes and certain breast and ovarian cancer.
- Breastfeeding saves money. Breast milk is free and breastfed babies may be sick less often, which may keep your healthcare costs low.
- Breastfeeding is convenient. There are no bottles to heat up and no formula to measure and mix, which saves time.

## How can I support breastfeeding?

As a dad, you may feel left out of feeding if your partner breastfeeds your new baby. But your baby and your partner need your help. Breastfeeding is a team effort, and you play an important role. Here are ways you can offer support and encouragement, and be involved in the breastfeeding journey.



- **Learn the breastfeeding basics.** Before your baby arrives, join your partner at a WIC breastfeeding class to learn about how breastfeeding works, how much milk your baby needs, and how to know whether your baby is getting enough milk.
- **Help take care of your baby.** You can soothe, bathe, change diaper, dress, and burp your baby.
- **Bond with your baby.** Cuddle, rock, and hold your baby skin to skin. You can also read, talk, or sing to your baby.
- **Take care of your partner.** If mom is uncomfortable or has pain, it may be because the baby is not latching on correctly or she may be engorged. Contact WIC breastfeeding staff who can help her stay on track. You can also make sure mom is taking care of herself.
- **Watch for hunger signs.** Learn your baby's hunger cues so that you can bring your baby to your partner to breastfeed.
- **Limit visitors.** New moms need plenty of rest! Help limit the number of visitors that come to your home.
- **Go the extra mile.** Help with chores. Run errands, cook, clean, and do laundry. If mom needs something while she's breastfeeding, offer to get it for her. If you have other children, take care of them so your partner can focus on breastfeeding.
- **Offer encouragement.** Help your partner feel good about herself. Tell her you're proud of her and that she's doing a great job. Try to do something special for her.

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For more information on breastfeeding  
and how you can be part  
of the breastfeeding team,  
**[WICBreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov](https://www.wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov)**

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