

TIPS® Toolkit for Breastfeeding



Congratulations on your pregnancy!

Whether you are a first time or an experienced mum you are bound to have a few questions regarding breastfeeding.

I am delighted to be able to share with you my common sense breastfeeding tips, in the hope that they will help to dispel any myths you may have heard. I want to give you the encouragement you deserve, at this special time, to help boost your confidence.

Most of us agree that breastfeeding is best for mum and baby but this is not enough to guarantee success. Learning to breastfeed is no different to learning any new skill: it takes time. Lack of support, conflicting advice, poor information and negative attitudes are all too common. To succeed, you will need constant support, plenty of encouragement and lots of practical tips. There are simple and effective solutions to any problem you may have when learning to breastfeed. With the right advice, you too can become a successful breastfeeder.



Getting help ...

Peer support groups are ideal for ongoing support. Speaking to a friend or a breastfeeding counsellor who is experienced in breastfeeding is a great help. To find out about your nearest peer support group, contact a breastfeeding association, for example the National Childbirth Trust (NCT), the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM), the Breast Feeding Network (BfN) or La Leche League (LLL).

This breastfeeding toolkit is by Sharon Trotter RM BSc - Breastfeeding Consultant and Neonatal Skincare Advisor. Sharon is a registered midwife with over 24 years' experience of helping new mums and seven years personal experience breastfeeding her own five babies. Author of the best selling breastfeeding book *Breastfeeding: the essential guide*, Sharon works independently as a breastfeeding consultant and baby skincare advisor. She is founder of TIPS Ltd which is well respected for the quality of its assessment of mother and baby related products reviewed through the TIPS Award Scheme.

My breastfeeding top tips ...

Surround yourself with positive support from family, friends and people who really know about breastfeeding (see the 'Getting help' section of this factsheet for how to contact peer support groups).

Positioning and attachment - get help from the start

- be inventive - there are 360° of attachment so finding the perfect position for you and your baby may take a while and a certain amount of trial and error. You will know when you have achieved this because feeding will be comfortable
- find out about biological nurturing - this is a mother-centred approach. It suggests new ways to hold and cuddle babies and aims to increase the enjoyment of breastfeeding. This can greatly help with positioning and attachment
- remember that breastfeeding should not hurt - if you are in pain get help from someone who really understands breastfeeding. If you suffer from sore nipples:
 - correct your positioning and attachment to prevent any further damage
 - use a soothing ointment or balm to protect them while they heal - moist healing works twice as quickly than if left dry. Detailed reviews of over 20 breast pads and treatments are available from the awards section on www.tipslimited.com

Milk supply - listen to your baby and feed him whenever and for as long as he wants. This is known as demand feeding and really helps to promote and maintain a steady milk supply. This is especially important during the night when hormone levels are higher.

- remember that in the early days it is not unusual for a baby to feed between 12 and 20 times in a 24 hour period. This will settle down - promise!
 - don't be tempted to introduce bottles or formula feeds - it takes around six to eight weeks for the delicate balance of milk supply and demand to be established
 - try to avoid expressing in the early weeks - this will not stimulate you to produce milk as well as direct feeding
 - try not to be separated from your baby - close contact (not necessarily skin-to-skin) greatly helps to stimulate milk producing hormones. Just the smell, sight and touch of your baby will help you to produce milk

Baby's weight - growth charts used in the UK are based on bottle fed babies so weight gain for your breastfed baby may appear to be slow. These growth charts will be replaced with World Health Organisation (WHO) breastfeeding growth charts soon

- as long as your baby is waking up for feeds, taking feeds well and having wet and dirty nappies, you can be reassured that he is getting enough milk

Including dad - always include your partner so they can share the feeding process

- close contact with dad should be encouraged. This will help promote a closer bond as you all settle into your new family unit, no matter how big or how small

Breastfeeding is so much more than just a way of feeding your baby milk....

- breastfeeding will help you to lose the extra weight your body gained during pregnancy
- breastfeeding provides the emotional and psychological stability your baby needs to become self confident, relaxed, independent and secure
- with each feed you will get a rush of endorphins, which are basically 'happy hormones'. This makes you and your baby feel good and is the best stress-buster I know - enjoy!

