

TIPS TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING:

1. Examine your breasts during pregnancy.
2. Inform yourself about the benefits of breastfeeding during pregnancy.
3. Discuss breastfeeding with your obstetrician and midwife.
4. Hold the baby skin to skin as soon as possible after birth.
5. Put the baby to the breast in the **first hour** of life.
6. Know the baby's early feeding signs.
7. Do not give up – it gets easier with practice and patience.
8. Ask family and friends for support.
9. Drink plenty of water and eat a wide variety of nutritious food in line with the Mediterranean diet.
10. Be informed about growth spurts at 3 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 9 months
11. Discuss with your employer on different work options (such as reduced hours, teleworking, flexi hours).
12. Learn how to express breast milk.
13. Find a childcare centre close to work.
14. It is safe to get vaccinated during breastfeeding, even with live vaccines such as MMR and chickenpox.

YOU MAY CONTACT

Parentcraft Services
2545-5124

Breastfeeding walk in clinic
2545-4445

Health Promotion Disease Prevention Directorate
2326-6000

Nutrition Helpline
80073307



@HPDPMalta



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY FOR HEALTH



BREASTFEEDING Nature's Finest

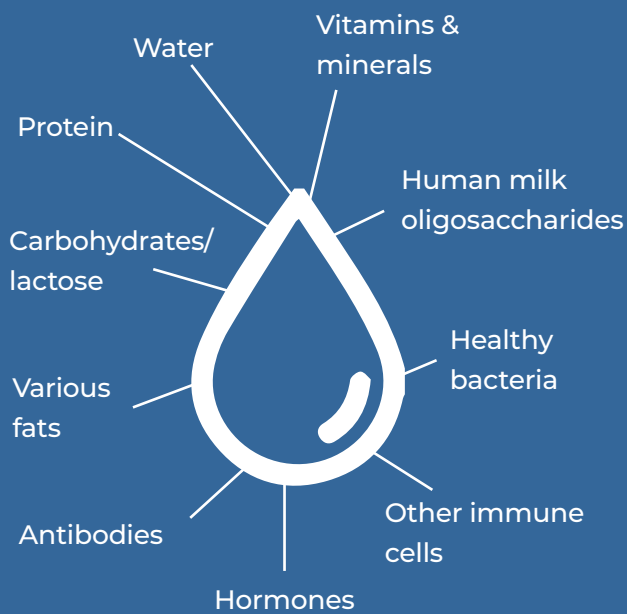
Breastfeeding is an excellent way for the new mother to connect with her baby and for increasing bonding between the two.

The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breast-feeding for the first **SIX MONTHS** of life and subsequently during the introduction of solid foods and continued beyond 2 years. This means that no other liquid, including water and breast milk substitute, should be given unless indicated by a paediatrician.

What happens in your baby's first days of life will affect his/her health in the short and long term.

What does breast milk contain?

Breast milk is the best food for your baby, especially for preterm babies. Breast milk has the right combination of nutrition needed for proper growth and development. The breast milk content changes to meet the growing needs of the child.



Breast milk is easier for babies to digest due to the presence of natural substances. Breast milk contains antibodies from the mother which protect the baby's defence system and the small intestines. Moreover it will lower the risk of infections from harmful bacteria, viral and fungal organisms, thereby preventing gastrointestinal and respiratory infections.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING?

Breastfeeding is beneficial both to the mother and to the baby resulting in a healthier child in both the short and long term.

Benefits to the mother

Helps the mother to return to her pre-pregnancy weight.

Reduces the onset of long-term diseases such as diabetes type 2, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Reduces the risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer.

Reduces post-delivery blood loss whilst lowering the risk of anaemia.

Benefits to the baby

Helps with growth and development.

Provides optimal nutritional food.

Promotes immunity.

Helps to fight infections and to reduce the risk of gastrointestinal and respiratory infections.

Helps the baby maintain a healthy weight as he/she grows older.

Provides long term benefits as it reduces the risk of your child developing diseases such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes.



How to breastfeed successfully?

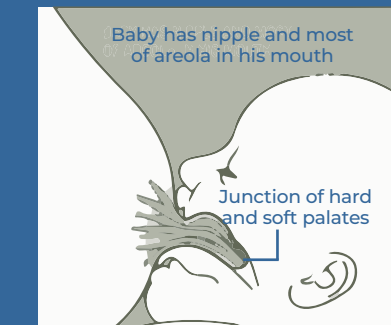
Breastfeeding has to be learnt and you and your baby might need some practice and patience to get it right. By holding the baby close to the breast and placing him/her in the correct position from the first contact after birth, is more likely that breastfeeding will be successful.

The following are the signs of correct positioning of the baby to the breast:

1. Nose is free
2. Baby has a large mouthful of breast
3. You may not be able to see the areola (darker area around the nipple) but if you can, there should be more showing above the baby's top lip than the bottom lip.
4. Baby's lips are turned outwards.
5. Baby's chin is touching the breast.
6. Baby's cheeks stay rounded during sucking.
7. At first, your baby sucks fast, then slower and longer.
8. Baby finishes feed and comes off the breast on his/her own.

The following are the signs of incorrect positioning of the baby to the breast:

1. Painful nipples.
2. No change in your baby's sucking pattern or sucking is short and fluttered.
3. Cheeks are drawn-in or dimpled.
4. Your baby is restless and keeps coming off the breast.



Correct positioning



Incorrect positioning