



# What to Expect in the First Three Months

Information for New Parents

**best start**  
**meilleur départ**

by/par health **nexus** santé

## Congratulations on the birth of your baby.

This handout will provide you with some important information on what to expect in the first three months after your baby is born.

The websites and resources in this handout are intended to guide you and your family on what to expect in the first three months of your baby's life at home. You will find answers to questions you may have regarding healthy newborn care and care of the mother and of the family.

If you have a premature baby, twins, or other special situation, you may need some additional support beyond the information found in this guide.

*The information in this booklet, including the resources and links, does not replace medical advice from your health care provider. Due to unique individual needs, consult with your health care provider for medical attention and guidance.*



**Do not hesitate to ask for help if you are worried for any reason about your baby's health or your health.**

## When to See a Health Care Provider FOR YOUR BABY

























### Follow ups:

- At 48-72 hours after leaving the hospital/ birthing center or after a home birth
- At 1 week old
- At 2 months old (to start immunization schedule)
- As recommended by your health care provider

## See a health care provider if your baby:

- Is still having black stools at 5 days old
- Is very sleepy and always has to be woken up to eat
- Is hard to wake or seems very weak
- Has a fever
- Is breathing very quickly or has trouble breathing
- Has lips or ear lobes that are blue or grey in colour
- Jaundice is getting darker or more intense
- Is losing weight or not gaining weight 2 weeks or so after birth
- Has sunken eyes or the soft spot on top of the head is sunken
- Has a very dry mouth, lips, tongue, or nose
- Has pale, cold, and moist skin
- Is having a seizure (e.g., staring vacantly, whole body is shaking)
- Vomits large quantities or forceful (projectile) vomiting twice or more per day (spit-up or bringing up small quantities of milk is normal, even at every feed)
- High-pitched crying over prolonged periods and your baby has other symptoms like diarrhea or a fever. Note that babies can be extra-fussy late afternoon and evening hours. See the period of purple crying at [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)
- In the first 3 weeks, if your newborn is not following *Guidelines for Nursing Mothers* (see below) call your health care provider.

GUIDELINES FOR NURSING MOTHERS									
Your Baby's Age	1 WEEK							2 WEEKS	3 WEEKS
	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	4 DAYS	5 DAYS	6 DAYS	7 DAYS		
<b>How Often Should You Breastfeed?</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	       								
At least 8 feeds per day (every 1 to 3 hours). Your baby is sucking strongly, slowly, steadily and swallowing often.									
<b>Your Baby's Tummy Size</b>	 Size of a cherry		 Size of a walnut		 Size of an apricot		 Size of an egg		
<b>Wet Diapers: How Many, How Wet</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 WET	 At least 2 WET	 At least 3 WET	 At least 4 WET	 At least 6 HEAVY WET WITH PALE YELLOW OR CLEAR URINE				
<b>Soiled Diapers: Number and Colour of Stools</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	 At least 1 to 2 BLACK OR DARK GREEN		 At least 3 BROWN, GREEN, OR YELLOW		 At least 3 large, soft and seedy YELLOW				
<b>Your Baby's Weight</b>	Babies lose an average of 7% of their birth weight in the first 3 days after birth.				From Day 4 onward your baby should gain 20 to 35g per day (C/d to 1B/d oz) and regain his or her birth weight by 10 to 14 days.				
<b>Other Signs</b>	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily. Your breasts feel softer and less full after breastfeeding.								
<div><div><div></div><div>by/par health </div></div><div>Breast milk is all the food a baby needs for the first six months — At six months of age begin introducing solid foods while continuing to breastfeed until age two or older. (WHO, UNICEF, Canadian Pediatric Society)</div><div>If you need help ask your doctor, nurse, or midwife. To find the health department nearest you, call INFO line: 1-800-268-1154. For peer breastfeeding support call La Leche League Canada Referral Service 1-800-665-4324.</div><div>03/2009</div></div>									



# When to See a Health Care Provider

## FOR THE MOTHER

### Follow up:

- Breastfeeding support within 48 hours of birth or sooner than 48 hours if needed
- 6 weeks after your baby is born

### See a health care provider if:

- You notice a bad smell coming from your vagina
- You pass lots of large blood clots from your vagina
- The amount of blood coming from your vagina becomes heavier (e.g., soaking more than one pad an hour) instead of lighter
- Your stitches open
- You have a fever
- Your nipples or breasts hurt
- You are thinking about not breastfeeding as much or stopping altogether
- You are feeling worried about breastfeeding
- If for two weeks or more you are having signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety. Feelings such as feeling sad, panic, tearful, hopeless, unable to concentrate, frustrated, or having scary thoughts (see the mental health resources on page 10)
- You are worried about yourself or your baby for any reason



# Websites and Resources

## Find information on:

- Breastfeeding
- Newborn Care
- Newborn Safety
- Sleeping
- Growth and Development
- Mother's Care
- Mental Health
- Services to support parents

## BREASTFEEDING

## Where to get breastfeeding help

- **Telehealth Ontario 24/7 Breastfeeding Supports**  
Breastfeeding advice and support service  
1-866-797-0000 or [www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario](http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario)
- **Bilingual Online Ontario Breastfeeding Services**  
Search for breastfeeding services near you [www.ontariobreastfeeds.ca](http://www.ontariobreastfeeds.ca)
- **Your local public health unit**  
To find out about programs and services close to your home offered by your public health unit  
1-800-267-8097 or [www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx)
- **La Leche League Canada**  
For mother-to-mother breastfeeding support  
1-800-665-4324 or [www.lllc.ca](http://www.lllc.ca)
- **Motherisk**  
The helpline offers information and counseling on alcohol and substance use  
1-877-FAS-INFO (1-877-327-4636) or [www.motherisk.org](http://www.motherisk.org)
- **To find a Lactation Consultant**  
Search for a lactation consultant who works in either private practice or in clinical settings  
<http://connect.ilca.org/main/why-ibclc/falc>
- **EatRight Ontario**  
Speak with a Registered Dietitian for free  
1-877-510-5102 or visit [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)

## Websites

- **Breastfeeding Information for Parents**  
An interactive breastfeeding course for parents  
[www.breastfeedinginfoforparents.ca](http://www.breastfeedinginfoforparents.ca)



# BREASTFEEDING



## Resources

- ***Breastfeeding Matters: An Important Guide to Breastfeeding for Women and their Families***  
The booklet is available in many languages will help you and your family learn about breastfeeding basics and gaining confidence  
[www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/BreastfeedingMatters\\_2013\\_low\\_rez\\_reference.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/BreastfeedingMatters_2013_low_rez_reference.pdf)
- ***My Breastfeeding Guide***  
Answers breastfeeding questions you may have as an expectant parent or as a new parent  
[www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/BSRC\\_My\\_Breastfeeding\\_Guide\\_EN.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/BSRC_My_Breastfeeding_Guide_EN.pdf)
- ***Breastfeeding Your Baby***  
A reminder chart to assess your infant's breastfeeding effectiveness during the first three weeks  
[www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/breastfdeskref09.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/breastfdeskref09.pdf)
- ***Breastfeeding for the Health and Future of Our Nation***  
A resource for Aboriginal women to find support and answers about the art of breastfeeding  
[www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/BFHFN\\_sept26.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/BFHFN_sept26.pdf)
- ***Pregnancy and Breastfeeding***  
Canada's Food Guide can help women eat the amount and type of food to support breastfeeding  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/choose-choix/advice-conseil/women-femmes-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/choose-choix/advice-conseil/women-femmes-eng.php)

## Videos

- ***BreastFeeding Inc***  
[www.breastfeedinginc.ca/content.php?pagename=online-info](http://www.breastfeedinginc.ca/content.php?pagename=online-info)
- ***Breastfeeding Instructional Videos***  
[www.peelregion.ca/health/family-health/breastfeeding/resources/video/index.htm](http://www.peelregion.ca/health/family-health/breastfeeding/resources/video/index.htm)

## Apps

- ***Breastfeeding Solutions***  
[www.nancymohrbacher.com/app-support/](http://www.nancymohrbacher.com/app-support/)
- ***WYNI – Breastfeeding Information***  
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/wyni-breastfeeding-information/id955007811?mt=8>  
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.wechu.wyni>
- ***Mom and Baby to Be***  
<https://itunes.apple.com/app/mom-and-baby-to-be/id560579312?mt=8>

## NEWBORN CARE



### Websites

- ***I Just Had a Baby – Birth to 3 Months***

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services provides information about many topics of interest for parents, including sections on what to expect, how you can give your baby the best start and frequently asked questions

[www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/earlychildhood/development/baby/questions.aspx](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/earlychildhood/development/baby/questions.aspx)

- ***24HR Cribside Assistance***

Hosted by Dad Central, this site is developed by fathers for fathers. It addresses basic questions about babies, new moms and new dads in a humorous and factual way [www.newdadmanual.ca/](http://www.newdadmanual.ca/)

- ***The Period of Purple Crying***

Created by the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, this website and program presents a different way to understand your baby's crying [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)

- ***A Healthy Start for Baby and Me***

This resource includes information about how to comfort and care for your baby, when to get help for your baby, breastfeeding and how to keep your baby safe

[www.beststart.org/resources/rep\\_health/pdf/low\\_lit\\_book\\_fnl\\_LR.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/rep_health/pdf/low_lit_book_fnl_LR.pdf)

## NEWBORN SAFETY



### Websites

- ***A Parent's Guide to Vaccination***

The Public Health Agency of Canada provides information on vaccination and on its importance to protect your child's health [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/iyc-vve/pgi-gpv/index-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/iyc-vve/pgi-gpv/index-eng.php)

- ***Install a child car seat***

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation website provides information on how to correctly install a child car seat, booster seats and seatbelts to help protect children from serious injury

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/install-child-car-seat.shtml>

### Resources

- ***A Healthy Start for Baby and Me*** This guide includes information about newborn safety

[www.beststart.org/resources/rep\\_health/pdf/low\\_lit\\_book\\_fnl\\_LR.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/rep_health/pdf/low_lit_book_fnl_LR.pdf)

- ***Is Your Child Safe? Series*** Health Canada offers a series of publications regarding the safe use of consumer products intended for children

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/index-eng.php)



## NEWBORN SLEEPING



### Websites

- ***Sleep Well, Sleep Safe***

The booklet provides information on healthy sleep tips for infants and for parents. It also provides information on safe sleep tips to reduce the risks of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep related causes of infant death

[www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy\\_chld\\_dev/pdf/BSRC\\_Sleep\\_Well\\_resource\\_FNL\\_LR.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/BSRC_Sleep_Well_resource_FNL_LR.pdf)

- ***Safe Sleep***

This site from the Public Health Agency of Canada promotes awareness about SIDS and safe infant sleep environments [www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep)

### Video

- ***Safe Sleep***

Video from the Public Health Agency of Canada to promote awareness about SIDS and safe infant sleep environments [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance\\_0-2/sids/ss-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/sids/ss-eng.php)

## NEWBORN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



### Resources

- ***WHO Growth Charts***

The Growth Standards provide information about how infants and young children grow regardless of their ethnic background and regardless of feeding method

[www.dietitians.ca/Dietitians-Views/Prenatal-and-Infant/WHO-Growth-Charts.aspx](http://www.dietitians.ca/Dietitians-Views/Prenatal-and-Infant/WHO-Growth-Charts.aspx)

- ***Nipissing District Developmental Screen***

This tool can be used by parents and professionals to track an infant's development. It tells you what important skills your baby should master by a particular age between birth and 6 years

[www.ndds.ca/ontario](http://www.ndds.ca/ontario)

- ***Rourke Baby Record***

A guide that many Canadian doctors and other health care providers use for well baby and child visits for infants and children from 1 week to 5 years of age. This website allows you to search what is normal for your baby by topic or by your baby's age [www.rourkebabyrecord.ca/parents/default.asp](http://www.rourkebabyrecord.ca/parents/default.asp)

- ***Tips for Parents – Brain Development***

Parents can view 15 tip lists on topics associated with brain development. They cover preconception, pregnancy and child development ages 0-3 <http://en.beststart.org/resources-and-research/tips-parents-brain-development>

- ***My Child and I – Attachment for Life***

This booklet helps you understand the principles of attachment and how to promote attachment

[www.beststart.org/resources/other\\_languages/parent\\_attachment/parent\\_attachment\\_eng\\_Oct2012.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/other_languages/parent_attachment/parent_attachment_eng_Oct2012.pdf)

- ***Baby Wants***

A booklet to encourage parents to do simple things to help develop their young child such as playing, reading, singing, etc. [www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy\\_chld\\_dev/pdf/babywants.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/babywants.pdf)





## MOTHER'S CARE

### Websites

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- ***A Healthy Start for Baby and Me***

Includes information about changes to expect to your body and your feelings after the birth of your baby  
[www.beststart.org/resources/rep\\_health/pdf/low\\_lit\\_book\\_fnl\\_LR.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/rep_health/pdf/low_lit_book_fnl_LR.pdf)

- ***Sexual Health***

Learn about what to expect the first time after baby and birth control options  
[www.sexualityandu.ca/sexual-health/pregnancy/what-to-expect-the-first-time](http://www.sexualityandu.ca/sexual-health/pregnancy/what-to-expect-the-first-time)



## MOTHER'S MENTAL HEALTH

### Websites

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- ***Pregnancy Is Not Always What You Expect***

This booklet talks about how women can take care of their mental health before and during pregnancy and shares information about depression and anxiety during pregnancy  
[www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/TakeCareMentalHealth\\_EN\\_rev.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/TakeCareMentalHealth_EN_rev.pdf)

- ***Managing Depression – A Self-help Skills Resource for Women Living With Depression During Pregnancy, After Delivery and Beyond***

The workbook provides information about depression and healthy behaviours, and skills for managing depression  
[www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/DepressionWorkbook\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/DepressionWorkbook_ENG.pdf)

- ***Life With a New Baby Is Not Always What You Expect***

The brochure provides pregnant women and new parents with information on baby blues and postpartum mood disorders. Parents are encouraged to seek help and use strategies for self-care  
[www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/ppmd\\_bro\\_eng\\_lr.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/ppmd/ppmd_bro_eng_lr.pdf)

- ***When Dad Gets the Blues***

This article provides information about fathers reporting signs of depression after the birth of their baby  
[https://footprintsoffatherhood.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/fathers\\_ppd1.pdf](https://footprintsoffatherhood.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/fathers_ppd1.pdf)

## SERVICES TO SUPPORT PARENTS



- ***Assaulted Women's Help Line***

A crisis line available to help in 150 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
1-866-863-0511  
[www.awhl.org](http://www.awhl.org)

- ***Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs***

Find a directory of family resource programs across Canada  
1-866-637-7226  
[www.parentsmatter.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=602](http://www.parentsmatter.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=602)

- ***EatRight Ontario***

To speak with a Registered Dietitian for free  
1-877-510-5102  
[www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)

- ***Health Care Options near you***

Find health care services in your community  
[www.ontario.ca/locations/health/index.php?lang=en](http://www.ontario.ca/locations/health/index.php?lang=en)

- ***Mental Health Helpline***

Help is available 24 hours, 7 days a week  
1-866-531-2600  
[www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca](http://www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca)

- ***Motherisk***

Find information about taking medications during pregnancy and breastfeeding  
416-813-6780; 1-877-439-2744  
[www.motherisk.org](http://www.motherisk.org)

- ***Telehealth Ontario***

A free, confidential service you can call to get health advice or information.  
You can call 24 hours a day  
1-866-797-0000  
[www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario](http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario)

- ***Your local Ontario Early Years Centres***

Get information about programs and services that are available for young children and their families and talk to early years professionals, as well as other parents and caregivers in the community  
[www.oeyc.edu.gov.on.ca/locations/index.aspx](http://www.oeyc.edu.gov.on.ca/locations/index.aspx)

- ***Your local public health unit***

To help you find the nearest health unit and services offered in your community  
1-800-267-8097  
[www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx)

- ***211 Ontario***

A helpline to help you find programs and services in your area  
211  
[www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)

## My Personal Help

### Name and Title

(partner, family, friends, neighbours,  
peer support, community drop-ins, blogs, etc.)

### Contact Information

(phone numbers, emails, web links and addresses)


## My Health Care Providers

### Name and Title

(doctor, midwife, doula, nurse, nurse practitioner,  
breastfeeding consultant/clinics, dietitian,  
doula/labour support person, exercise coach, etc.)

### Contact Information

(office number, cell numbers, emails, web links,  
addresses)

Telehealth Ontario

1-866-797-0000

My Local public health unit

My local Ontario Early Years Centre

211 Ontario Helpline

211


*We would like to thank the parents and the experts who provided input on this booklet.*





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[www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)

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