

Fact Sheet

Breastfeeding: Helping baby to breastfeed

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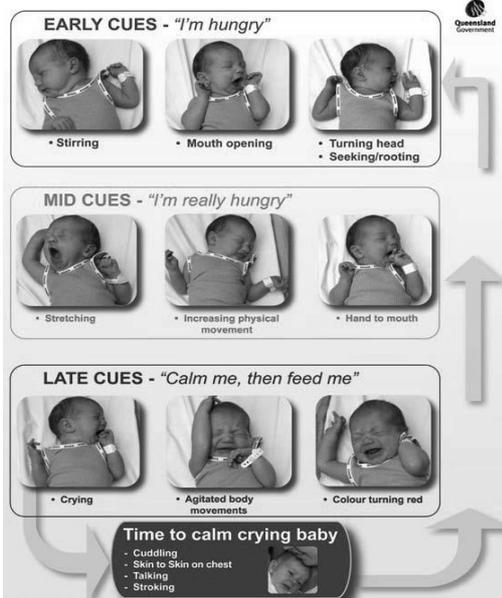
Signs that your baby is ready to feed.

- stirring from sleep with yawning and stretching
- opening mouth and licking lips
- bringing hands to mouth
- sucking on hands

If baby is not offered a breastfeed at this time, crying may occur.

Crying is a late sign and your baby needs to be calmed by cuddling, skin to skin on chest, talking and stroking baby before feeding baby.

Baby Feeding Cues (signs)



Helping baby to attach to your breasts.

- being in a comfortable position, with your back and feet supported helps you to relax
- this position also helps your oxytocin hormone to be released which helps milk to flow
- unwrapping your baby and positioning baby facing you is important
- you can support your baby behind the upper back and/or shoulders - be sure that your baby is able to move his/her head and neck freely
- when babies are placed skin to skin (between the mother's breasts) at feed time, they usually make their own way down to the breast by using their sense of smell and touch (rooting reflex)
- the rooting reflex allows your baby to search and open his/her mouth wide
- this reflex is stimulated when the baby's cheeks/chin rub against the skin of your breast
- another position that may help with attaching your baby is to stand up so that your breasts fall forward
- this will help your nipples point to their natural position and then you can then bring baby up to your breast
- each mother and baby will find their own way to attach to the breast and feed
- it is important that you and your baby have lots of time to learn to do this together

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- if you need help, the midwives and other staff will talk you through helping your baby attach to your breast.

Good attachment and frequent feeding will get breastfeeding off to a good start. This can take a while and patience on your part will help you along the way

Breastfeeding positions



Football hold



Transitional hold



Lying down



Laid Back



Madonna Hold

Watch this introductory video on [Breastfeeding Attachment- Global Health Media](#)

[Breastfeeding Basics- Australian Breastfeeding Association](#)

How to breastfeed: breastfeeding positions
www.raisingchildren.net.au/articles/breastfeeding_positions_video.html

This video takes you through different breastfeeding positions to help you find a position that works for you and your baby. This video shows common positions like cradle and cross-cradle holds, underarm or 'football' hold, lying on your side and semi-reclined. Watch a mum feeding her baby using the different positions and get information on help with breastfeeding.)

Signs of good attachment and feeding.

- no pinching/pulling or painful feeling on your nipple while baby is feeding
- your baby's cheeks look full- this means your baby has a good mouth full of your breast
- Your baby's chin is pressed into your breast
- your baby's chest is against your chest
- you may see a short burst of sucking at first. The rhythm of baby's sucking then becomes slow and even with big jaw movements
- baby may take short breaks but continues to suck again on their own without you stroking your baby
- you may hear your baby swallow
- your nipple has a normal shape when baby comes off the breast at the end of the feed

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Poor Attachment



Good Attachment

Click on the video links on page 2. These videos have tips for good attachment to help you get your baby feeding well

The video includes an animated diagram, a mum's point of view and step-by-step instructions. It helps new mums see what good attachment looks and feels like and understand how babies feed.)

Baby led attachment.

To help your baby attach to the breast on his/her own with little help it is important that you are leaning back with your baby resting across your tummy. This position starts at birth with skin-to-skin contact between you and your baby. You place your baby on your chest, resting between your breasts. The baby moves to the nipple and attaches to the breast. It is comforting and reassuring to you and your baby. Many mothers continue to feed in this position.

This position helps your baby to attach well to the breast with a wide open mouth. You and your baby have good eye contact and you are able to lean back and relax.

Baby led attachment is also helpful when the baby is having difficulty attaching to the breast.

Watch these videos

[Breastfeeding Attachment- Global Health Media](#)

[Breastfeeding Basics- Australian Breastfeeding Association](#)

[Breastfeeding and baby-led attachment-'Raising children's network'](#)

Acknowledgements

This content was produced in collaboration with the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA). Raising Children Network thanks Renee Kam, ABA breastfeeding counsellor and private lactation consultant, Yasna Blandin de Chalain, maternal and child health nurse and counsellor, and Simone Casey, ABA breastfeeding counsellor and private lactation consultant.

The Raising Children Network invites organisations and individuals to download and add this parenting video to their websites free of charge. The video must not be edited and must appear with the following statement:

Sourced from the Raising Children website, Australia's trusted parenting website. For more parenting information, visit raisingchildren.net.au.

We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

WSLHD-Get_Involved@health.nsw.gov.au