



Grandparents Guide to



Breastfeeding

Understanding the importance of breastfeeding, how you can be supportive and ways to bond with baby.

The Importance of Support

Infant feeding practices have changed throughout the years. We now understand the importance of breastfeeding and the positive impact that support can have on breastfeeding success.



“A supportive partner, family member, or friend, plays a key role in the success of breastfeeding.”

- Public Health Agency of Canada

Why Breastfeed?

Breastfeeding is normal. Breastfeeding is recommended exclusively for the first 6 months, and continued for up to 2 years and longer with appropriate solid foods. This is important for the healthy growth and development of infants and toddlers.

Risks & Costs of **Not** Breastfeeding

For Baby

Allergies

Ear, chest and bladder infections

Stomach and gut problems

Reduced IQ scores

Some childhood cancers

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Obesity and chronic diseases later in life

For Mother

Increased bleeding after birth

Breast and ovarian cancer

Weight gain and type 2 diabetes

Osteoporosis

Difficulty of reversing decision

Costs

Increased financial burden of purchasing equipment, products, and storing

-INFACT Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada



What Can I Do to Help?

As a grandparent, you play a very important role in your grandchild's life. Your children may look to you for information and support.

- Respect the family's infant feeding decision.
- Be supportive. Remind mom that what she is doing is important and how proud you are of her. This will help her to feel more confident to continue to breastfeed.
- Be sensitive to feelings, and listen to needs and concerns without giving unwanted advice.
- If there are struggles with feeding, gently encourage support services (see Breastfeeding Services section on page 7).
- Provide practical help to the new family, such as, cooking, cleaning, and laundry.

Breastfeeding FAQ's

1. How often should babies feed?

Babies should breastfeed at least 8 times in a 24-hour period and according to their feeding cues (hands to mouth, sucking or licking hands, lip smacking, head turning to breast, crying).

2. It seems like the baby is eating all the time, is that normal?

Many mothers worry that they do not have enough milk. Sometimes babies seem very hungry and feed more than usual, especially in the first few days when a small amount of breast milk is all a baby needs to fill their small stomach size. Frequent feeds can also occur during a growth spurt (around 10 days, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months of age). This is normal and should only last a few days. It is baby's way of meeting their nutritional needs.

3. How can you tell if baby is getting enough milk?

The following are ways to know if baby is getting enough milk:

Baby is feeding at least 8 times in 24 hours

Baby has enough wet and dirty diapers according to age

Baby is calm and satisfied after feedings

Baby is active and has a strong cry

Baby has a wet pink mouth and bright eyes



4. Should babies sleep through the night?

Each baby is different. Babies need to feed around the clock, especially at first because they have small stomachs. Feeding on cue will satisfy baby, help with milk production and help prevent breast fullness. Babies will sleep for longer stretches at their own developmental pace.

5. When should babies start solids?

At 6 months and breastfeeding should continue up to 2 years and longer with appropriate solid food.

6. Is it okay to breastfeed in public?

Yes, it is a mother's right to breastfeed anywhere, anytime. Babies should be fed when they are hungry. This will help milk supply and prevent breast fullness. Also, by supporting moms to breastfeed in public we are helping to normalize it within our community. Breastfeeding in public takes confidence. Your support is important.

7. Are there foods that should be avoided while breastfeeding?

Mothers should try to follow Canada's Food Guide and drink to satisfy her thirst. Mothers should talk with their health care provider if they wish to consume caffeine, herbal teas, or alcohol for specific guidelines.

8. I couldn't breastfeed, does that mean my daughter won't be able to either?

Breastfeeding issues are not passed down to children. Everyone is different. Knowledge and support have increased to help mothers breastfeed.

How Can I Bond with Baby?

As a grandparent, there are a lot of different ways that you can bond with baby:

Hold baby skin-to-skin

Bathing baby

Changing baby's diapers

Soothing baby

Reading or singing to baby

Cuddling baby

Taking baby for a walk

Breastfeeding Services

The Sudbury & District Health Unit offers many free breastfeeding services for families, including:

Prenatal classes

A Breastfeeding Companion (Peer telephone support program)

Breastfeeding Support Group (Baby Café)

Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Breastfeeding Clinic

Health Information Line

For more information on our breastfeeding services, call 705.522.9200, ext. 342 or visit sdhu.com.



Sudbury & District

Health Unit

Service de
santé publique

For more information, call the
Sudbury & District Health Unit.

Sudbury 705.522.9200

Espanola 705.222.9202

Sudbury East 705.222.9201

Chapleau 705.860.9200

Manitoulin Island 705.370.9200

sdhu.com

For other breastfeeding support services in your area:

- ontariobreastfeeds.ca
- Telehealth toll-free at 1.866.797.0000,
any day, any time.

