

Ways to Wake a Sleepy Baby for Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding

Your goal is to breastfeed your baby 8 to 12 times every 24 hours. Offer feedings when your baby shows hunger cues.

Sometimes, in the first 2 weeks, your baby will not wake up on his or her own to eat. You need to wake your baby every 2 to 3 hours.

Your baby's feeding pattern may be unpredictable (snacks and marathons) but normal. Not all feedings are spaced evenly. Your baby may eat more some days than others, and he or she may eat more often than 1 to 3 hours.

Waking a Sleepy Baby

Your baby may be sleepy during a feeding. Try the following to wake your baby or keep him or her awake.

- Undress your baby from his or her blanket or remove the clothing except for the diaper.
- Before breastfeeding, cuddle skin-to-skin with your baby by placing him or her on your chest. Make sure your baby's arms and legs are outstretched.
- Express some colostrum or breastmilk onto your baby's lips.
- Do breast compression while your baby is latched but not actively sucking. Talk with a lactation consultant if you need to learn how to do breast compression.

- Sing or talk to your baby.
- Dress your baby and place your baby his or her crib after trying to feed.

How to Tell if Your Baby is Getting Enough Breastmilk

In general, you can tell if your baby is getting enough milk if he or she:

- feeds 8 to 12 times in 24 hours
- has bursts of sucking and swallowing
- appears satisfied after feeding
- has enough wet and soiled diapers based on his or her age
- regains his or her birth weight in 10 to 14 days.

Whom To Call With Questions

If you have questions or concerns about your baby's health (including feeding and weight gain), talk with your baby's health care provider.

If you have questions or concerns about breastfeeding, talk with your lactation consultant or your nurse.