

Colostrum for Your Baby's Health

"I didn't think I had any milk at first, but then my nurse told me about colostrum."

What is colostrum?

The first milk a mother makes is called colostrum. It is a thick, sticky, yellowish liquid that is very good for your baby. It is easy to digest. It is rich in important nutrients, such as Vitamin A, protein, and minerals, which help your baby grow. It is also full of antibodies, helping protect your baby from bacteria and viruses.



You produce colostrum for the first few days after delivery. This is followed by 'transitional milk'. The amount of breast milk increases about 2 to 5 days after delivery.

What does colostrum do?

- ✓ It acts like a mild laxative, helping your baby have a bowel movement (poop).
- ✓ It helps prevent yellow skin and eyes (a condition called jaundice).
- ✓ It coats and protects your baby's gut.
- ✓ It helps protect your baby against lung infections, stomach and gut infections, and even ear infections.

Is my colostrum enough for my baby?

Yes! Most babies get everything they need from even tiny amounts of colostrum. Most babies have extra fluid and fat stored in their bodies to help them while mom's milk increases.

It is **normal** for babies to lose 5 to 7% of their body weight in the first few days. They usually return to their birth weight in 7 to 14 days.

Try not to give your baby formula, except for medical reasons. Even one bottle of formula can interfere with your milk supply. Babies who are fed colostrum and breast milk are less likely to get sick than babies fed formula.

How often should I feed my baby?

Put your baby to the breast (or hand express) at least 8 times a day for the first 2 to 4 days.

Did you know? The more often you feed...

- the more colostrum your baby gets
- the more milk you produce
- the easier it is for your baby to learn to breastfeed while your breasts are still soft
- the more likely you are to breastfeed for a longer time

Tip: To make more milk, express a few drops of colostrum into a teaspoon after you breastfeed. Don't waste it! Give it to your baby.

"My baby really liked my colostrum. I have a lot more milk now and my baby is thriving!"

