

Feeding your baby

Information to help decide

Parents have many questions about feeding their babies. We are listening and will answer your questions accurately and thoughtfully. We offer parents information from current studies to help them decide how to feed their baby.

Many parents want to breastfeed/chestfeed their baby. Some choose to do mixed feeding or formula feeding for medical or personal reasons. Parents and health care providers work together to consider what is safe and works best for each baby.

What are the benefits of feeding my milk to my baby?

Studies tell us that human milk is best to help babies grow and help protect them from infection. This protection continues as your child gets older and they are no longer breastfed/chestfed. That is why doctors and midwives recommend babies only have human milk for the first 6 months. They recommend continuing with your own milk as your baby starts on solid foods, and until at least 2 years of age.

Even babies who are just partly breastfed/chestfed get some protection from these health conditions:

- eczema
- colds, flus, ear infections, chest infections
- allergies, asthma
- vomiting and diarrhea
- gut or bowel conditions
- some childhood cancers
- diabetes, obesity, heart disease, stroke
- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

What are the benefits to me?

When you breastfeed/chestfeed your baby, some health conditions are less likely to happen, such as:

- bleeding problems after delivery
- high blood pressure
- heart disease
- diabetes
- breast cancer before menopause
- ovarian cancer
- weak bones (osteoporosis)
- some types of dementia

Any breastfeeding/chestfeeding offers good nutrition and better health for you and your baby.

What if I need help with feeding?

Breastfeeding/chestfeeding is a new skill to be learned by you and your baby. It can take up to 6 weeks to feel confident.

Go to fraserhealth.ca/parenting:

- To find information about what to expect with feeds and how to know baby is getting enough.
- To find help with feeding.



What about using formula?

There might be medical or personal reasons for using formula. Talk to your health care providers about any concerns you might have with feeding your baby. We are here to help you meet your goals for feeding your baby.

Did you know? The cost of formula goes up regularly. Ready-to-feed formula can cost \$3000 to \$5000 a year, not including bottles and other equipment.

Other benefits to feeding your milk to your baby

To learn more, check these links from the La Leche League.



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