



Child Health Info



Your guide to the first 12 months



You have a new baby!

Queensland Health clinicians and experts from other services have written this booklet. It is to help answer some of the common questions parents and carers have about caring for their baby.

It covers the stages of your baby's progress from birth through to their first birthday and help on feeding your growing baby.

Studies show that a healthy start for your baby is the bridge to a healthy life, right through to adulthood. What helps your baby to be healthy is good nutrition and a safe and secure setting. What helps your baby feel secure is a warm and loving bond with parents and carers, talking, singing and playing with them from birth.

If you would like to know more about how your child grows and learns, their health or nutrition, contact your child health nurse or your doctor. You can also sign up to receive free parenting news at www.raisingchildren.net.au and www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/our-work/connecting2u (a free SMS service).

The list of emergency and helpful contacts at the back of this book will also point you towards further help.

Enjoy your first year of parenthood!



Raising Children



Connecting2u

For your digital version of this book, go to
www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/resources/health-services/personal-health-record/your-guide-to-the-first-12-months

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At the start

Register your baby's birth

It is important to register your baby's birth within 60 days. It is free. For more info check the back of the first tab in your child's Personal Health Record or visit www.qld.gov.au/law/births-deaths-marriages-and-divorces/birth-registration-and-adoption-records/register-a-birth

Personal Health Record

Your Personal Health Record (PHR) or sometimes called the ("Red book") keeps track of your child's growth, health checks and immunisations. There are sections for you to fill in to help your health care provider better understand your child.

Bring this to all health care visits. Health care providers can record the visit, allowing other providers to access your child's health checks and immunisation records.

Child Health Nurse Role

Registered Nurses (RN) who have qualifications and experience in child and family health nursing are called child health nurses. Some may also have qualifications in midwifery or paediatrics or be International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC). They help you with health advice and support following the birth of your baby up until your child turns 5. To find your nearest Child Health Clinic call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

General Practitioner Role

Your General Practitioner (GP) plays a key role in supporting both your baby's health and your family's wellbeing. This involves regular visits to monitor growth and development as well as for any health concerns.

Your Health

Having a baby, brings changes to your body and emotions. It's vital to take care of your health and relationships. This helps you feel good and be a great parent to your baby. Here are some tips:

- **Eat healthy food:** Choose a variety of foods.
- **Get rest:** Sleep when you can, day and night.
- **Exercise:** Move your body every day, like walking.

You may feel anxious or sad sometimes. Talk to your doctor if these feelings don't go away or if there are changes to your body that worry you. For more info go to www.raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/mental-health-resources/parent-mental-health-and-wellbeing/promoting-parent-mental-health/looking-after-yourself or scan the QR code

Visit New parents - COPE
www.cope.org.au/new-parents/
Or call
ForWhen 1300 24 23 22
PANDA 1300 726 306



Some things to know

Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS-R©)

As a parent you know your child best. If you notice things that concern you, share it with your doctor or nurse. This can help them know your child better and pick up any problems early. PEDS-R© is a set of 12 questions. It takes place at 6, 12, 18 months, and 2½–3½ and 4–5 year visits. Fill out the questions in your PHR before each health check and talk to the doctor or nurse.

The first 5 years set them up for life

In the first years of life, your child's brain forms over a million new connections each second. Simple activities with you help grow their brain. Talk, read, sing and play each day. Join other parents with young children at your local library for free and fun baby story time sessions. You can visit First 5 Forever for free tips www.slq.qld.gov.au/first5forever

Playgroup

Play Matters supports learning through play. They support parents and others in their role as the children's first teachers. Visit Play Matters for a playgroup near you www.playmatters.org.au/about/queensland

Kindergarten (kindy)

It's never too early to sign your child up to kindy. There are studies that show that children's learning and care alters their health, how happy they are and skills. This can last throughout

their lives. A Queensland Government-approved kindergarten program helps children with their feelings, physical, social and brain growth and helps them learn. Children must be at least 4 years old by 30 June in the year they attend an approved program.

For more info go to www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/kindy

Beyond the first 12 months

For info on topics beyond the first 12 months, go to Raising Children Network www.raisingchildren.net.au/

You can also download the Raising Healthy Minds app which supports your child's social and emotional wellbeing **Raising Healthy Minds app | Raising Children Network**

Healthy Teeth

It is best to have your child's mouth checked by 2 years of age or before. Children may be able to have free dental care through the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS). You can get care under the CDBS through most public dental services or private dentists.

For more info www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/oral-health/information-for/babies-and-toddlers

Australian Child Dental Benefits Scheme
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-dental-benefits-schedule

Bonding

Bonding with your baby

You may start to have mixed feelings about your baby when pregnant. Such as excitement, worry, happiness and concern. This is normal. After birth, it will take time for you and your baby to get to know each other, like any new relationship.

There are a lot of new things to adjust to:

- a new person in the house
- a change to your sleep routine
- you are feeling tired
- you are caring for a baby and learning about their needs.

The first few days and weeks following delivery can bring a mix of feelings. If these feelings worry you, talk to your doctor or child health nurse.

Learning to look after a new baby

Babies have unique personalities, thoughts, feelings and way they see their world. To care for them well, parents must learn to understand these signals.

- A baby's brain develops rapidly from birth until around three years old. It is almost full size by then. So, it is crucial that you meet their physical, social and emotional needs to make sure the brain develops in the best way possible.
- A baby will cry if they want or need something. It's important that you respond to their crying, in a gentle way, and be consistent. Check what may be making your baby upset - check their nappy, if they are hungry, are they too hot or cold,

or need a cuddle.

- It is through kind, consistent and responsive connection that a baby learns to become who they are. It is how they learn to trust in people. Over time it is how they learn how to manage their feelings in a healthy way. For more info go to www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/connecting-communicating
- Babies communicate with their parents by:
 - **Facial expressions:** They use smiles, frowns and other faces.
 - **Soothing words:** They respond to gentle speech.
 - **Babbles and bubbles:** They make sounds and form bubbles with their mouths (their first speech).
 - **Copying you:** They mimic your actions and sounds.
 - **Cuddles:** They like physical attention especially when upset.
- Your baby loves looking at your face. Bring them about a ruler's length from your face and look into their eyes. See how they gaze back at you and concentrate. This is hard work for your baby's brain. A good time to do this is when you're feeding. Or you can just hold them and have a chat. You can say something and watch and see how they respond. Then have another turn at saying something and wait for them to take their turn.

Bonding

- Stay looking at them until they turn their gaze back to you. Welcome them back by saying “what did you see?” or “are you tired?” or “was that exciting?” or “yes I’m here for you”.
- Babies enjoy their parents love and interest. They love lots of gentle touch and close contact with you and close family. It may be tiring but you are building their trust in you, your bond together and their connection with other family members.
- Babies like a flexible but predictable routine. If their routine changes at times this is ok. If they feel safe and secure with you, they will be ok.
- Talk with your baby about the routine that is happening, like at bath time or when you are dressing them: “We are going to change your nappy and clean you up”. You can also name actions that you are doing when you are dressing your baby: “One arm through, now the other arm”. This helps babies learn to predict what’s coming next.
- Babies love leading play. They play by exploring with their eyes. If you follow their gaze and describe what they are looking at this will help you build a close bond. Soon you can give them things to hold, feel and touch. They will start to grab objects. If you explore with them by watching what interests your baby, it builds trust, their learning and connection between you both.

Calming your baby

When your baby is not happy, think about what this might be like for them and do your best to comfort them.

- Try placing your baby against your bare chest for skin-to-skin contact.
- Gently rock your baby and try different positions to settle them.
- Sing nursery rhymes or play some soothing music, white noise or running water to create a calm space.
- Put them in a warm bath or do a baby massage.
- Take them for a walk outside in the pram or baby sling.
- See if they need a sleep or just need close contact with you.
- Talk to your baby and try to put what they are feeling into words. Like, “You’re so happy to be playing this game”. Or “Oh it’s so hard when you feel hungry, wet, tired, frightened”. “You look sad”. “Yes, it’s hard to wait for me to get your food ready”. “Let’s see if a cuddle will help”.

For more info go to

www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns

Looking after a new baby can be hard. It is life changing. Many parents expect to fall in love with their baby at birth. Mostly this happens but it can take time to bond. Accept help from loved ones. If something doesn’t feel right speak to someone. See a doctor, midwife or nurse.

It’s normal to have baby blues for a few days. If these persist or if you feel sad, worried or have fears, talk with your GP, child health nurse or a counsellor. For more info call Parentline on 1300 301 300, PANDA Helpline 1300 726 306, or **Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Treatment Online | MumSpace**

Keeping your baby safe

Safe Sleeping

There are steps to help your baby sleep safely and reduce the risk of sudden infant death.

1. Always place baby on their back to sleep.
2. Keep baby's face and head uncovered.
3. Keep baby smoke free, before and after birth.
4. Safe sleeping space, night and day.
5. Sleep baby in their own safe sleeping place in the parent's room for the first 6-12 months.
6. Breastfeed baby if you can.



Back to sleep
Tummy to play
Sit up to look at the world.

To keep your baby safe while sleeping:

- Put your baby's feet at the bottom of the cot.
- Make sure the cot meets the Australian standard AS/NZS 2172:2003.
- Use a firm, flat, clean mattress that fits well in the cot.
- Don't add extra mattresses or padding in a cot, travel cot or porta cot.
- Tuck in the bedclothes, so they aren't loose.
- Keep quilts, doonas, duvets, pillows, cot bumpers, sheepskins and soft toys out of the cot or sleeping place.
- Don't use inclined sleepers, baby nests or sleep positioners.

A baby sleeping bag that fits your baby well is safe. It needs a snug neck and armholes or sleeves where the baby's arms are free and no hood. This is a safe way to keep your baby's head and face uncovered. This means you don't need extra blankets. When your baby starts to roll over, like reaching their arms across their body or moving their legs from side to side, you must keep your baby's arms out of the swaddle.

Bouncinettes, rockers, prams, strollers and car seats or carriers are NOT for sleeping. So, if a baby falls asleep in them, someone should always watch them.

www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/safe-sleeping

Keeping your baby safe

Sleeping with your baby

Some families sleep in the same bed or sleeping surface with their baby. This can sometimes be risky. It may increase the risk of sudden infant death.

If you choose to do this, here are some tips to make it safer.

- Always put your baby to sleep on their back – never on their tummy or side.
- If your baby lies on their side to breastfeed, put them back on their back to sleep.
- Use a firm, flat mattress.
- Make sure bedding can't cover your baby's face or make them too hot (use light blankets and remove pillows, doonas and other soft items).
- Sleep your baby beside one parent, not between two parents, to keep them safe from adult bedding.
- Make sure your partner knows the baby is in the bed.
- Use a baby sleeping bag instead of adult bedding to keep your baby safe.
- Don't wrap your baby if you are sharing a bed or sleep surface, so they can move their arms and legs.
- Make sure your baby can't fall off the bed. A safer option is to put the mattress on the floor but watch out for places where your baby can get stuck.
- Pushing the bed against the wall can be dangerous. Babies have died after they were trapped between the bed and the wall.

- Never let your baby sleep in a bed with other children or pets.
- Don't leave a bottle in the bed or prop it up for your baby.
- **Never let your baby sleep or share a sleep space on a sofa, lounge, rocking chair, beanbag, waterbed or soft saggy mattress.**
- Three sided cots that attach to the bed are not safe. A four-sided cot with one side down, next to the bed, is safer for your baby.
- Do not sleep with your baby when:
 - you have been affected by alcohol or drugs.
 - you are taking anything that makes you sleepy.
 - you're very tired.

This can increase your baby's risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) and accidents.

Wrapping

Wrapping your baby in a lightweight cotton or muslin wrap can help them to settle and sleep.

Wrapping is a safe way to help your baby sleep.

If you choose to wrap your baby, make sure:

- You put your baby on their back while wrapped.
- Your baby's face and head are not covered.
- Your baby is not overdressed under the wrap.
- The wrap is firm, not tight.

Keeping your baby safe

Safe sleeping (continued)

- To stop wrapping your baby once they start to show signs of rolling.
- Your baby is not sharing a bed or sleep surface with another person while wrapped.

Some first signs your baby is starting to roll include:

- Lifting their legs and feet.
- Using their hands to touch their feet.
- Using their arms to reach across their body.
- Rolling onto their side.
- Rocking from side to side.

These signs mean that it is no longer safe to wrap, swaddle or use a sleeping bag that holds your baby's arms.

For more info

Contact Red Nose on 1300 998 698 or go to

www.rednose.org.au/section/safe-sleeping

Ways to prevent a flat spot (plagiocephaly) on your baby's head:

- Place your baby on their back to sleep.
- Change your baby's head position every time they sleep.
- Give your baby lots of tummy time when they are awake.
- Move toys around so that your baby looks in different directions.
- Encourage your baby to turn their head to either side when you talk or play with them.
- Put your baby to sleep at different ends of the cot or move the cot to face a different direction.
- Carry your baby in an upright position.
- Avoid keeping your baby in car seats, strollers, swings and bouncers for too long.
- Don't switch to a softer mattress.
- Don't change your baby's sleeping position to their side or tummy.
- Don't use a pillow or roll to keep your baby's head in place.
- Don't use sleep positioners or wedges to keep your baby on their back or side.
- If you're worried, talk to your doctor or child health nurse about your baby's head shape. For more info www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/health-daily-care/health-concerns/plagiocephaly

Keeping your baby safe

Safety advice for you and your baby

Injury causes the most deaths among Queensland children.

Queensland has one of the highest death rates from childhood harm in Australia. The home is the most common place for children's injuries to happen.

As you care for your baby and watch them grow, be aware of all the ways children can hurt themselves.

The most common harm is from falls, drowning, burns and eating or drinking something that causes harm.

Parents can prevent most accidents before they happen. Set up a safe home for your baby using the checklist below. Exploring their world and seeing how things work are all crucial to children's learning. Watching your baby and knowing what they are doing always, will help keep them safe.

To download a Home Safety Checklist, visit www.kidsafeqld.com.au. Use this checklist each year as your child grows and explores.

First Aid

Parents and others should learn resuscitation (CPR) by joining a First Aid Class. This can teach you how to keep calm and give care in an emergency. This may save a life – every second counts.

Caring for your baby

- Always stay with your baby when they are on change tables, chairs, beds or other high furniture. They can fall even if you leave them for a few seconds.
- Hold your baby when feeding them a bottle, rather than propping the bottle up. Babies can vomit or choke on milk when you don't hold them to feed. Holding your baby upright will lower the risk of ear infections and tooth decay.
- Do not heat your baby's bottle in a microwave. The milk can be hot in spots and cold in others and could scald your baby's mouth.
- Never hold hot food or drinks, such as tea, coffee or noodles, while holding your baby. Burns from hot water and drinks can cause scarring to your child's skin.
- Make sure each person looking after your baby knows that they should never shake a child. Shaking a baby can cause brain damage or death. For more info visit www.napcan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/NAPCAN-Its-Not-Ok
- Keep your baby out of direct sun. Place your baby in the shade when you can. Use clothing that covers their skin and a broad brim or bucket hat.
- Use SPF30 or higher, water-resistant sunscreen when your baby is over 6 months old
- For info on looking after your baby's skin from the sun go to www.sunsmart.com.au/protect-your-skin/be-a-sunsmart-family

Toys

Toys must be safe, sturdy and washable. If a toy is furry, babies can suck on the fur and swallow it. Wash toys often even the bath ones to avoid mould.

Keeping your baby safe

Safety advice for you and your baby (continued)

Do not give your baby toys to play with that contain small round “button batteries”.

- Toys should not have:
 - ribbons, long strings or elastic, small or loose parts that the baby can pull or chew off.
 - squeakers that can become loose, or the baby can remove.
 - sharp edges or points.
 - rattles that a baby or older child can take apart.
- Make sure your baby can't break teething rings with their teeth.
- Cuddly toys filled with old stockings, dacron or polyester are the safest. Your baby can choke on or put foam, beans and beads into ears or noses.

Clothes and dummies

- If your baby has a dummy, check it:
 - is in good repair.
 - has no ribbons or chains.
 - has holes in the plastic holder for quick, easy removal in an emergency.
 - is used to calm your baby and not put them to sleep.
- Don't dip it in sugar, honey or other food or drink.
- If your child uses a dummy after ten months of age it can increase the risk of ear infections. This can lead to hearing loss.

- Remove any loose ties or ends on clothing because they can choke your baby.
- Look inside mittens and booties to make sure there are no loops or threads. Look for loose adult hair. These can wind around your baby's fingers and toes. They can cut off blood flow.
- Take hats and other head coverings off your baby before they go to sleep. Hats may cause your baby to overheat or may cover the face.

Bath time

- Always check the heat of the water with your wrist or elbow before putting your baby in the bath.
- Never leave your baby alone during bath time, not even for a minute.
- Don't leave older children to care for the baby in the bath.
- Check that your home has a working hot water tempering device installed and set at (50° C).

Around your home

Your baby can move and is keen to explore. Check your house often to keep your baby safe.

- Know which items have button batteries in them, they are dangerous if inserted in the nose or ear or if swallowed. If you cannot secure the battery compartment remove the button battery, wrap both sides in sticky tape and keep them out of reach of children. Take the battery to a store that has a battery

Keeping your baby safe

recycling bin. If you think your child has swallowed or inserted a button battery in their ear or nose, immediately call the 24-hour Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for fast expert advice. If this is not possible go straight to the hospital emergency.

- Always secure your baby with the seat belts or other safety restraints when in a bouncer, stroller or highchair.
- Always keep one hand on your child while they are on the change table.
- When your child is playing, look to make sure there are no objects in reach that are small enough to eat. As a guide, something small enough to fit inside a toilet roll is small enough for your baby to swallow. You may need to look at the room from the eye level of your child.
- Install smoke detectors throughout your home, check them and change the batteries often. This will protect all of you. Call your local fire service for more info or book a free Fire Home Safety check on 13 74 68.
- Supervise when your baby is near cats and dogs. Do not leave them alone. Especially when dogs are feeding, sleeping or there are new puppies. Family pets can get jealous when you bring a new baby home. Don't leave your baby alone when near pets, at home or out.
- As your child starts using their mouth to taste everything around them, be aware of them getting poisoned. Use a high cupboard that you can lock, in the kitchen, bathroom, laundry and garage to store poisonous items. Never use food or drink bottles to store chemicals.
- Keep all alcohol from your baby's reach (check after a party). Your baby can be poisoned with a small amount of alcohol.
- Handbags and nappy bags contain items that can be dangerous to a child like tablets and vapes. Hand sanitisers don't have a child resistant cap and contain alcohol. Keep out of reach of children.
- Keep away from your baby when smoking and vaping. Keep cigarettes, lighters, ashtrays, cigarette butts and vaping liquids away from the reach of children. These are poisonous to children.
- Check your home has an electric safety switch fitted and running to prevent electrical injuries.
- Fence play spaces so the child is away from the street, pool, spa and driveway. In rural homes fence a play space for children away from any dams or other water. Be aware that small children can slip through pet doors. This may lead them to spaces that are not safe like pools and dams.
- Use the **Kidsafe Home Safety Checklist** every year.
- If unsure if something is safe for your child call Kidsafe Queensland on 3854 1829 or go to **www.productsafety.gov.au/consumers/keep-baby-safe**
To find out which products have been banned or recalled go to **www.productsafety.gov.au/recalls**

Keeping your baby safe

Safety advice for you and your baby (continued)

- Enrol in baby swim lessons for water safety. This will help them learn the skills they need to be safer in and around the water. Some swim schools offer free lessons for young babies. Keep your baby from getting too cold as they can't control their temperature like an adult. Protect your baby from the sun with the right clothing. For more tips visit www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/babies-and-swimming
- Be aware of pool hygiene. For tips visit www.raisingchildren.net.au/babies/health-daily-care/health-concerns/pool-hygiene

Out and about

- Each time your baby travels in a car they must be facing the back of the car. Use an Australian Standard approved baby capsule or child car restraint.
- Never leave your baby alone in the car — not even for a minute.
- Check where your baby is before driving, especially reversing the car.
- Place the baby into the child car restraint, baby capsule, stroller or pram with no wraps.
- Sling and infant carrier safety – **TICKS** rule:
 - **Tight** - Keep slings and carriers tight enough to hug the baby close and upright with their back straight and the bottom and knees supported. No curling or slumping and knees not bunched up on their tummy.

- **In view at all times** - You can see your baby's face when you look down (without moving the carrier). Your baby's face, nose and mouth should be facing sideways and uncovered.
- **Close enough to kiss** - Close enough to your chin that you can kiss their head, about two finger widths between.
- **Keep chin off chest** - Their chin should be facing up and toward their shoulder.

Baby slings | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

- Buckle your baby in when they're in a shopping trolley or stroller to prevent falls. Always stay with them.

Be aware of hazards in your yard: poisonous plants, mushrooms, unfenced water, sharp objects, tools, insects and pets.

For more info call Kidsafe Queensland on 3854 1829 or visit www.kidsafeqld.com.au.

Smoking and vaping

Babies and children are at higher risk of damage from being around smoking and vaping than adults. This is because their bodies are still growing. They breathe faster than an adult. They can't fight illness the same as an adult.

Babies and children who are around tobacco smoke and vapours are at risk of Sudden Infant Death in Infancy (SUDI).

Keeping your baby safe

It is best to avoid exposing babies and children to smoke and vapour. If you have your baby in smoke and vape free places, they are less likely to get sick. Smoking and vaping can increase the risk of children having breathing issues such as bronchitis and pneumonia. It can cause regular ear infections which may lead to hearing loss.

You can reduce your children's contact with cigarette and vape effects by:

- Quitting - Queensland Health's Quitline service has a free quit smoking support program. This is for anyone who smokes and or vapes, and is caring for a child three years and under. The 'Smoke-free Family' program offers a series of quit smoking support calls. It also provides each person a 12-week supply of Nicotine Replacement Products. This helps you to a smoke and or vape free future. You can call Quitline on 13 78 48 and mention Smoke-free Family or scan this QR code to ask for a call from Quitline.



- Keeping your car and home as smoke and vape free zones. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car, with a child present under the age of 16 years.

- Choosing an outside smoking or vaping area, away from open windows and doors. Use a shirt over your clothes while smoking or vaping and take it off before handling your baby.
- Smoking or vaping after feeding your baby, not before.
- Changing your own and your baby's clothing often during the day so the chemicals and smell is not on you.
- Not bed-sharing with your baby if you smoke or vape.
- Not smoking or vaping while you are pregnant.

Parents are role models for their children. By not smoking or vaping you are teaching your children how to be healthier.

Drinking alcohol after the birth of your baby

Alcohol can impair your ability to safely care for your baby and respond to situations. It can cause drowsiness. Your baby may be at a higher risk of injury around you or someone who has drunk alcohol. Experts state that not drinking alcohol is the safest choice when caring for children.

Drug use after the birth of your baby

Side effects from taking drugs may mean you are not able to respond to your baby's needs. If you or your baby's carer is less responsive because of these effects, the baby may be at a higher risk of injury. Some types of drugs can make you so sleepy you can't stay awake. Others may make you tired even after the drug wears off.

Immunisation

Immunisation is when a clinician gives a medicine (vaccine). It is to help the body learn how to fight off certain diseases. A GP or nurse gives it by needle or drops of medicine in the mouth. The vaccines work well to keep your child healthy. They protect your child from serious diseases. This includes meningococcal ACWY and B strains, measles, mumps, rubella, polio, Haemophilus influenzae type b, whooping cough (pertussis), hepatitis B, pneumococcal, rotavirus, chickenpox (varicella), influenza, tetanus and diphtheria. These diseases can make your child sick. They can cause health problems like brain damage and hearing loss and sometimes even death. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are eligible for extra vaccines.

The flu vaccination is for adults and for all children over 6 months of age. In 2025 it is free.

Look under the Immunisation tab of the PHR to see when the immunisation is due or check the Immunisation Schedule Queensland: www.health.qld.gov.au/qld-immunisation-schedule-children.pdf

Take the PHR with you when your baby gets vaccinations. The GP or nurse will fill it in. You can see your child's immunisation record on My Health Record at www.digitalhealth.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/my-health-record

Protect on time

Get the immunisations and on time. Use the list in the PHR to guide when to have them. If they are late your child may be exposed to the diseases the vaccines prevent.

Your baby will need immunisations from birth. Some (like Rotavirus and Respiratory Syncytial Virus) are given at certain times. If you are late your baby may miss out on protection. The GP or nurse will talk with you about the vaccinations due that day. Ask if there are any other vaccines available that are not funded under the National Immunisation Program.

Protection by parents, family and friends

Not all immunisations can be given at birth. Parents, family and friends can get boosters to protect your baby in this early period. They can be immunised for whooping cough, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), COVID and the flu.

Whooping cough is dangerous for babies and is spread by coughing, sneezing and kissing. Babies get severe chest infections, fits and brain damage from not enough oxygen. It is especially serious if your baby is under 6 months of age. Preventing others from giving it to your baby is important.

RSV is a virus that can cause a range of illnesses varying from mild colds to severe conditions such as pneumonia. The rates of needing to go to hospital from RSV infection are highest in infants less than 6 months old. A dose of RSV vaccine is recommended for pregnant women at 28-36 weeks. This protects the baby so they won't need to have an RSV immunisation at birth.

For more info go to

www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation

How your baby develops

Birth to 3 months

Each baby learns at their own pace, through the same stages or milestones and in about the same order.

Babies grow and learn all the time, but not always in steady patterns. At times, they practise skills for a while in one area like movement or language. It may seem as if they will never move to the next one. At other times they learn many skills fast.

What is important is that your baby is happy, safe, growing and learning new things.

In the early weeks or at any time if you are worried about your baby, keep a record of feeding and sleeping habits. Then talk to your GP or child health nurse about this.

Your baby

Knowing what your child can and can't do will help you to:

- keep your child safe
- help your child learn
- understand your child's behaviour
- enjoy the role of caring for your child.

Studies show that babies need active play time every day. How much time and what type of play will depend on your baby's age.

Keep your baby away from the TV, phone, iPad or other screens.

www.raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/media-technology/screen-time

Care for your baby

Your baby needs to feel loved, secure and safe.

Helping your baby to have a bond with close people in their life will help achieve this.

Try to avoid any yelling or fighting around your baby. This will also help your baby to feel safe. Babies and children need to be safe from hurt or hearing or seeing fighting in the home.

If you have concerns seek help or more info from DV Connect (1800 811 811).

More info

If you would like to know how your child learns or if you have any concerns about your child, talk to your doctor or child health nurse.

You could also ask at your local library for books on how children develop. Or go to a range of child health fact sheets at **www.raisingchildren.net.au/babies/development**

How your baby develops

Birth to 3 months (continued)

Your baby's movements

Up to 3 months old, your baby can't control most of their movements.

Babies have reflexes like sucking, sneezing and swallowing. Some reflexes, like throwing their arms out, stiffening and crying when they hear a noise, go away after a short time.

At 1 month

At 1 month old most babies:

- Turn their head and eyes to light.
- Watch faces while they are being fed or talked to.
- May smile to show joy.

Between 1 and 3 months

Between 1 and 3 months old most babies:

- Become stronger.
- Lift their head and chest and may start using their arms for support when on their tummy.
- Show more awareness of people.
- Smile and coo to show when they are happy.
- Show excitement when expecting something fun, like a bath or feeding time.
- Settle to sounds or voices they know and jump at sudden noises.

Feeding

Breastmilk or infant formula is all your baby needs until they are about 6 months old. Their body isn't ready for solid food until then. For more info go to the breastfeeding and infant formula feeding sections in this booklet. Eye contact and holding your baby while feeding, helps with bonding and attachment with you.

Tummy time

They need some tummy time from birth.

At first, you can do tummy time after bath time when drying your baby or during a massage.

Around 3 months old, when they are awake, play with your baby on their tummy. If you have concerns about tummy time talk to your child health nurse or doctor.

Tummy time helps your baby learn to roll, sit, crawl and use their hands. It also helps prevent a flat head (plagiocephaly) (see page 8).

If your baby cries or becomes distressed:

- Try shorter tummy time sessions more often.
- Distract your baby by talking to them and using toys.
- Keep trying every day!

Go to: www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/how-your-baby-develops-from-0-to-3-months

How your baby develops

Talking

Babies learn to talk by hearing the sounds around them. They start learning to interact by making noises.

Talking, singing and reading to your baby helps them learn words. You can do this every day. Include it in activities like bath times and nappy changes and when your baby is awake and looking at you.

In the first few weeks, babies may reply to adults by changing their breathing and by moving their mouth. This happens when they see the adults' mouths moving when they talk.

If a dummy is in the baby's mouth, they can't practise making sounds. This is the main way your baby learns to talk.

Crying

Babies communicate or let you know their feelings by crying. They always have a reason for crying such as:

- being tired.
- feeling hungry.
- feeling pain.
- being wet, hot or cold.
- sensing that their parents are worried (which babies know).

Babies need their carer to calm them with a cuddle and gentle talking.

When you meet your baby's needs, they learn that you love them and you want them. This helps them build trust and love. If you

have trouble calming your baby, ask your child health nurse for help.

Playing and learning

Your baby learns from all the things you do with them. Like when you talk to them, while changing nappies, bathing, feeding or just being in the same room.

For babies, play is a way to learn and practice skills. It is also how they explore and find out about their world and the people in it.

In the first 3 months your baby will learn to:

- smile, chuckle and coo.
- turn towards sounds.
- look at and follow things with their eyes.
- reach out and touch things with their hands.

Play

The best things for your baby to play with are:

- parents and people who care for them talking, singing and reading after a sleep and feed.
- watching things moving around them such as bright coloured toys.
- lots of soft sounds to listen to.
- pram or stroller toys or hanging things to help their hands and eyes work together.

How your baby develops

Birth to 3 months (continued)

Safety

Make sure you are aware of the safety advice on pages 6–13.

Young babies are dependent on parents and carers for their safety. To help keep your baby safe, remember the following:

- Never leave babies with older children, even if they seem mature, it's not safe.
- Support your baby's head. Their neck muscles aren't strong enough yet.
- Hold your baby when feeding. Don't prop the bottle up. Babies can vomit or choke or get ear infections.
- Don't use a microwave to heat bottles. The milk can get too hot and burn your baby.
- Never leave your baby alone. This includes on a change table, in the bath, in the car or near pets.
- Secure your baby in prams, strollers or shopping trolleys. You need to unwrap them first and then buckle them in. Don't cover the pram or stroller with a blanket; it can get too hot.
- Protect your baby from the sun. Babies under 6 months shouldn't use sunscreen. Instead keep them in the shade and dress them in protective clothing and a hat. See section on sun protection.
- Use a car seat. Always use an approved baby capsule or child restraint when travelling by car. Not securing your baby in a rear-facing car restraint or baby capsule will incur a fine and demerit points.
- Never leave your baby alone in a car or during bath time. Not even for a minute.
- Check for loose adult hair and make sure there are no loose threads in mittens, booties and socks. These can wrap around your baby's fingers or toes. They can cut off blood flow.
- Keep small objects away. This includes small batteries and magnets that babies could swallow.
- Ensure safe sleep. Follow the guidelines on pages 6–8.
- Avoid cigarette smoke or vapour from vapes around your baby. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car with a child under 16 years of age present. To quit, contact Quitline on 13 78 48 and ask about the free 'Smoke-free Family' program.

How your baby develops

3 to 6 months

Growth and development

Between the ages of 3 and 6 months, most babies:

- Will look at you and smile back.
- Become more alert and are attracted by bright or moving things like curtains, trees, shadows and mobiles.
- Can bring their hands together over their chest and look at them. They can now reach out for things, grasp and hold things.
- Will dribble more because their mouths make more saliva.
- Become aware of other parts of their body, like their chest, knees, genitals and toes. They learn what is part of them and what is not.
- Learn to roll over from tummy to back and back to tummy. Rolling changes what they can see and learn. It's safer for your baby to learn how to move on the floor rather than on the bed or change table.
- Are learning skills for crawling. Tummy play helps develop strong neck and back muscles. Do this every time they are awake after they feed.
- Sleep less during the day but maybe a little more at night.
- Are learning to sit with help.
- Turn their head or eyes towards sounds.
- Appear to listen.
- Wake easily to sound.

Language

Sounds are exciting for babies at this age. They start to babble and make some speech sounds.

To help your baby learn to understand and speak you can:

- Talk and sing to your baby, during everyday things like changing a nappy, bathing or feeding.
- Watch to see if your baby looks toward sounds to make sure they can hear. Hearing sounds is the main way your baby learns how to talk.
- Smile and talk back to your baby whenever they make sounds or smile.
- Read and tell stories to your baby every day.
- Reduce the use of a dummy because it stops them from practicing sounds. They need this for learning to talk later.
- Repeat the sounds your baby makes and add new sounds too.
- Let your baby see, touch and feel your face while you talk to them. This helps them copy your sounds and make new ones.

Your baby and other people

Babies start to show their personality around this age. They might be quiet, relaxed, impatient or need you a lot.

Parents don't feel the same about each of their children. Every child is unique and reacts in a different way to each parent.

Most babies are open towards everyone at this age. They can get distracted while feeding but still get enough food to stay healthy.

How your baby develops

3 to 6 months (continued)

Babies like to connect with people by smiling and 'talking'. They often smile back when you or someone else smiles at them.

Feed your baby when they are hungry, calm them when they are upset and enjoy them when awake. They will learn that they are loved, safe and can trust you.

Feeding

Breastmilk or infant formula is all your baby needs until around 6 months. Their body isn't ready for solid foods until then. From around 6 months your baby can start eating foods. They also will keep breastfeeding or having formula. Check this booklet for more info on breastfeeding and formula feeding. It is vital that you hold your baby and have eye contact during feeding. It helps with bonding and attachment.

See section on Introducing solid foods on when and why to introduce foods and other drinks.

Learning through play

Practise makes perfect with babies.

It is fun to watch and help them learn about themselves and their surroundings. Most babies will keep trying new activities until they can do them.

Babies explore by holding, feeling, looking at things and putting them in their mouth. They will shake toys to make noise.

Babies of this age:

- Learn to sit with support.
- Play with their toes.
- Move around by rolling, wriggling or crawling.

Join your baby in play by following their lead and playing with what they want. Sit with them and follow their gaze.

Consider joining a local playgroup. Contact Play Matters for a playgroup near you. www.playmatters.org.au

www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/how-your-baby-develops-3-6-months

Toys

Choose safe, durable and washable toys. Check the safe toy guidelines on pages 9-10. If toys are furry, remember babies can suck on the fur and swallow it.

Practise helps babies develop new skills. At this age babies need these types of toys:

- Bright, colourful objects they can see.
- Rattles or toys that you can stretch across the pram that your baby can reach.
- Rattles and other objects of different shapes, sizes and textures for holding and exploring. For example, small rattles for small hands, toys with bells, soft blocks or balls.
- Safe household objects.
- Musical toys, books and toys on frames.

How your baby develops

Safety

Stay updated with the safety advice on pages 6-13.

Between 3 and 6 months, babies can move on their own, pick-up objects and put them in their mouths.

To keep your baby safe, remember these guidelines:

- Never leave your baby with older children, no matter how reliable they seem.
- Hold your baby when feeding them a bottle. Don't prop them up as they can vomit or inhale milk. It can also cause ear infections and hearing loss.
- Never leave your baby alone on a change table, furniture, bed, bouncer, rocker, in the bath, car or near pets.
- Protect your baby from the sun and heat. Babies under 6 months shouldn't use sunscreen because their skin is sensitive. Instead, seek shade, use clothing that covers their skin and a broadbrim or bucket hat. See section on Sun protection for more sun protection tips.
- Don't cover the pram or stroller with a blanket. It cuts air flow and can cause heatstroke.
- Always use an approved baby capsule or rear facing child restraint when travelling in a car. Never leave your baby alone in a car, not even for a minute.
- Check for loose adult hair and make sure there are no loose threads in mittens, bootees and socks. These can wrap around your baby's fingers or toes. These could cut off blood flow.
- Never leave your baby alone during bath time.
- Keep small objects out of you baby's play area. Things like pins, button batteries, small magnets, dead insects, buttons, beads, nuts, coins and other small items can cause choking. Cigarette butts and vape liquid with nicotine are poisonous.
- Be careful with food when starting solids around 6 months. Don't give your baby small, hard foods such as raw pieces of apple, carrot, whole grapes, popcorn or nuts. See section on Introducing solid foods.
- Make sure your baby sleeps safely, by following the guidelines on pages 6-8.
- Avoid cigarette smoke or vapour from vapes around your baby. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car with a child under 16 years of age present. The best thing for you to do is quit smoking. Contact Quitline on 13 78 48 for the free 'Smoke-free Family' program.

As your child grows, they will become more mobile:

- Always buckle your baby in when in a highchair, stroller or shopping trolley to prevent falls.
- Use a playpen for short periods to help your baby get used to safety limits.

How your baby develops

3 to 6 months (continued)

- Check your home and garden for poisons or other dangerous objects like medicines. Put all chemicals and cleaners in a lockable cupboard, high and out of reach. Remove mushrooms and any poisonous or irritating plants from the garden. Discuss this with family and friends where your baby visits.

If your baby swallows something dangerous, or you think they have swallowed or inserted a button battery, immediately call the 24 hour Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for fast expert advice. If this is not possible go straight to the hospital emergency.

6 to 9 months

Growth and development

From 6 to 9 months, babies are always busy. They need to touch and explore things to learn their surroundings.

Everything goes into their mouth, even their feet. At this age they:

- grasp objects they see.
- focus on objects near and far and follow them with their eyes.
- start trying to crawl.

By 9 months

Babies will:

- Explore everything that they can reach.
- Look for hidden objects in the right place.
- Watch toys fall from the pram or highchair to the floor.
- Roll from tummy to back and back to tummy.
- Reach for toys.
- Sit without support.
- Move around on the floor (rolling, crawling, bottom shuffling).
- Enjoy eating with their fingers.
- Start drinking from a cup (spilling is common).
- Understand simple words like 'no' and 'bye-bye.'
- Copy speech sounds.
- Turn their head to soft sounds.

How your baby develops

Feeding

Around 6 months babies are ready to start developing skills for eating solid foods while also breastfeeding or having formula. Having eye contact and being held by you are vital during feeding. It helps with bonding and attachment. See section on Introducing solid foods for info on 'When and Why' to introduce foods and other drinks.

Your baby and other people

Between 6 and 9 months babies learn a lot about people:

- They recognise people they see every day.
- They are wary of strangers.
- They enjoy being with people they know using eye contact and facial expression.

Babies might cry if their mother is out of sight because they don't understand she will come back. Playing peek-a-boo helps them learn that people and things are there even when they can't see them. This is a normal part of how your baby develops.

Learning through play

Between 6 and 9 months, babies develop many new skills, through play. They improve their attention, memory, and other skills by playing, singing songs, and engaging in creative games. Go to www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/how-your-baby-develops-6-9-months

Sounds

Babies love listening to and making sounds like:

- Shaking rattles.
- Crumpling paper.
- High-pitched squealing.
- Laughing.
- Joining sounds together (ma-ma, da-da).
- Copying noises they hear.

You can help by repeating the sounds your baby makes and adding new ones. Remember if your baby has a dummy in their mouth, they can't practise making these sounds.

Handling and exploring

Playing with toys and household objects helps babies learn about different surfaces and temperatures such as:

- Warm and cold.
- Rough and smooth.
- Soft and hard.

They learn by:

- Banging things together.
- Using their fingertips to grasp objects.
- Passing objects from hand to hand.
- Picking up small things between their fingers and thumbs.
- Putting objects in their mouths.

How your baby develops

6 to 9 months (continued)

Enjoying music

Babies love music. Here are some fun ways they enjoy it:

- Singing and rocking to the beat.
- Copying actions to songs and nursery rhymes.
- Clapping hands along with the music.

Looking at books

Babies are learning to develop their attention for longer. They love to look at pictures and talking about them with you. Choose books that:

- Aren't easily torn.
- Have bright, clear colours.
- Show a few simple objects on each page.

Talking to your baby

Talking with you baby helps them learn language skills. Here's how:

- Listen to your baby and try to understand their sounds.
- Talk to your baby and respond when they communicate with a sound, cry, or when they look at something.
- Make eye contact and take turns talking.
- Watch what interests your baby and enjoy playing with them. These activities help build a strong bond and a sense of trust between you both.

Toys for babies

Playing with toys helps babies develop new skills. Here are some great toys for babies at this age:

- Bright, colourful objects, like mobiles in your baby's sight.
- Rattles or toys that can be reached in the pram.
- Rattles and objects of different shapes, sizes and textures for holding and exploring, like small rattles, toys with bells, soft blocks or balls.
- Activity sets.
- Bath toys.
- Small blocks — (larger than a match box, to avoid choking hazards).
- Safe household objects.
- Musical toys.
- Pull-along toys.
- Books.
- Balls.

Make sure the toys you choose are safe, durable and washable. Always check the safe toy guidelines on pages 9-10.

How your baby develops

Safety tips for babies

As babies become more mobile, it's vital to keep them safe. Here are some tips:

- Stay updated with the safety advice on pages 6-13.
- Remove hazards to keep your child safe as they explore.
- Never leave babies in the care of older children, no matter how reliable they seem.
- Use playpens for short periods, like when cooking or on the phone, but never leave your baby alone in a playpen. More about playpen safety www.productsafety.gov.au/consumers/keep-baby-safe
- Never leave your baby alone on a change table, furniture, a bed, in the bath, in the car or near pets.
- Always buckle them in when they're in a highchair, stroller or shopping trolley to prevent falls.
- Protect your baby from the sun: seek shade, use SPF30 or higher water-resistant sunscreen, dress them in clothing that covers as much skin as possible and use a broadbrimmed hat. See section on Sun protection.
- Don't cover the pram or stroller with a blanket. This can block air flow and increase the risk of heatstroke.
- Always use an approved baby capsule or child restraint when travelling in a car. Never leave your baby alone in a car, even for a minute.
- Keep your baby in a rear-facing child car restraint as long as possible. While the rule says 6 months, experts recommend keeping them rear-facing for at least 12 months.
- Check for loose adult hair and make sure there are no loose threads in mittens, booties and socks. These can wrap around your baby's fingers or toes. These could cut off blood flow.
- Never leave your baby alone during bath time.
- Ensure there are no small objects in the play area that your baby could swallow. Items like pins, button batteries, small magnets, dead insects, buttons, beads, nuts, coins and other small items can cause choking. Also keep cigarette butts and vapes with nicotine away from your baby.
- Be careful with food when starting solids around 6 months. Don't give your baby small, hard foods such as raw pieces of apple, carrot, whole grapes, popcorn or nuts. See section on Introducing solids.
- Cigarette smoke and vapour from vapes are harmful to your child. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car with a child under 16 years of age present. The best thing you can do is quit smoking. Call Quitline on 13 78 48 for help with the free 'Smoke-free Family' program.

How your baby develops

6 to 9 months (continued)

Your baby is mobile and loves to explore. Check your house often to keep your baby safe.

- Make sure all low cupboards have child-resistant latches, and drawers have locks. This is to keep poisons, medicines, cleaning products, knives, scissors and other dangerous objects out of reach.
- Be aware that your baby likes to taste everything. Many things in the backyard are poisonous, like mushrooms, certain plants, pool and garden chemicals. Keep all poisons locked in a cupboard in the kitchen, laundry, bathroom and garage, out of your baby's reach. Remind family and friends to do the same when your baby visits.
- Use safety barriers for steps, stairs and rooms you don't want your child to enter. Also use them to keep your child away from fireplaces, swimming pools, heaters and spas.
- Check your home and garden for drowning hazards. Keep your nappy bucket high, and with the lid fitted. Keep your bathroom and toilet doors closed. It takes 5 cm of water and 2 minutes for a child to drown. Make sure the fence and gates for the swimming pool work and you never leave them open.
- Keep your kettle and iron cords out of the reach of young children. Use stove and bench guards and curly cords to prevent children from pulling hot food and drinks onto themselves. Always turn saucepan handles to the back of the stove. Do not leave hot drinks or food unattended or in your baby's reach.
- Cover power points when they're not in use.
- Keep dangerous objects, like heaters and fans out of reach.
- Keep the bathroom door closed so your child can't touch the hot taps. Ask your plumber to reduce the household water temperature to avoid scalds and burns. Get hot water regulators or thermostats fitted on all bathroom hot water taps.
- Do not use baby walkers or baby jumpers (jolly jumpers). They are not advised or needed for your baby to develop in a healthy way.
- Dress your baby in nightwear made with fabric that is slow to burn or designed to reduce fire danger. Look for the low fire risk danger rating on the tag.
- Ensure that anyone caring for your baby has a safe space where the baby can explore.
- Ensure that your baby is sleeping safely, according to the guidelines on pages 6-8.
- On farms with waterholes, dams and creeks, fence the house with a self-locking gate.

If your baby swallows something dangerous, or you think they have swallowed or inserted a button battery, immediately call the 24 hour Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for fast expert advice. If this is not possible go straight to the hospital emergency.

How your baby develops

9 to 12 months

Growth and development

From 9–12 months your baby will be able to:

- Sit without support for a long time.
- Turn sideways without falling.
- Reach out to pick up toys from the floor.
- Move from rolling to crawling on all fours. Some babies have their own crawling style. Whatever works for them to move.
- Pull themselves up to stand using furniture. At first, they might not be able to sit back down slowly. They may flop down or cry for help.
- Start walking by stepping sideways while holding onto furniture.
- Learn to walk when you hold both hands, then with one hand.
- Stand-alone for a while, or even walk without help by 12 months.

Use of hands

Your baby's hand skills are growing at this age. They can:

- Use their fingertips to grasp and control objects.
- Stack blocks and put objects into containers because they can control how they release things.
- Practise throwing toys and food from strollers and high chairs.

Feeding

At this age, your baby doesn't need all their food to be smooth. Introduce lumpy mashed food before 9 months to avoid feeding problems later.

Your baby can chew even without teeth. Don't give them small, hard foods such as raw pieces of apple, carrot, whole grapes, popcorn or nuts.

Some babies like to feed themselves with finger foods but you must watch them. They will also enjoy trying to hold a spoon to feed themselves.

Many babies want to hold and drink from a cup. Help them to do this when the drink is almost finished or use a cup with a lid. It might be messy, but it helps your baby become independent. Making eye contact and connecting with your baby during feeding, is vital for bonding and attachment.

See section on Solids for more info on feeding at this age.

www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/how-your-baby-develops-9-12-months

How your baby develops

9 to 12 months *(continued)*

Talking

Babies between 9 and 12 months are interested in sounds, especially voices — their own and other people's.

During this time, they may say their first real word. It can be hard to hear it among all the other noises they make.

They love to:

- Babble for fun (for example, bubu, dada).
- Show what they want by pointing and making sounds.

The more you talk to your baby and respond to their attempts to speak, the easier it will be for their language skills to grow.

Taking turns to talk and copying your baby's sounds can be a fun way for them to learn.

Babies learn language through routine and when you repeat words. They will understand what you are saying before they start using words. Using single words over and over helps your baby hear and understand them and in time copy them.

When talking to your baby about things they are interested in, remember to get down to their level.

Talking during everyday activities, like changing a nappy or bath time, helps teach your child about language.

Reading books and talking about the pictures is another enjoyable way to help your child's language skills.

Your child and other people

At this age, your baby is more comfortable with other people but:

- sometimes don't like new faces and voices.
- may get upset if you leave, even for a short time.
- enjoys communicating with people they know using eye contact and facial expression.

This is normal because your baby is still learning to tell the difference between people they know and those they don't.

Learning through play

Playing helps children learn about the world. Different types of play, suitable for their age, help them learn.

Your baby needs chances to explore and try new skills. You can help by playing with and talking to your child.

Fun games to play are:

- Finger-toe songs and rhymes (for example 'This little piggy')
- Peek-a-boo
- Clapping hands
- Listening to and copying sounds.

How your baby develops

At this age, fun toys and activities include:

- Cars and trains for pushing
- Nesting cups
- Activity sets
- Household containers
- Non-toxic crayons and paper
- Blocks and other stacking toys
- Peg puzzles
- Soft cuddly toys
- Bath toys
- Medium to large balls.

You might like to join a local playgroup. Contact Play Matters for a playgroup near you. www.playmatters.org.au/about/queensland

Safety tips

Make sure you know the safety tips on pages 6-13.

Provide a safe place for your baby to explore and play. Babies from 9 to 12 months can move quickly and quietly. You should not leave them near windows, balconies or on high furniture.

Babies don't understand danger and can get into trouble fast so you need to watch them. Check your house often to keep your baby safe. Get down to your baby's eye level to spot any hazards.

As your baby learns to crawl, walk, climb and explore, the more likely they are to get hurt. This is also when babies start using furniture to pull themselves up.

Be careful with top-heavy furniture like flat screen TV's, that can tip over if not secured.

- Don't leave your baby with older children, no matter how mature they seem.
- Never leave your baby alone on a change table, bed, in the bath, in the car or near pets.
- Always buckle your baby in a highchair, stroller or shopping trolley to prevent falls.
- Protect your baby from the sun and heat. Seek shade when outside and use SPF30 or higher water-resistant sunscreen, clothing that covers as much skin as possible and a broadbrim or bucket hat. See section on Sun protection for more tips.
- Do not cover the pram or stroller with a blanket as it can cut off air flow and increase the risk of heatstroke.

How your baby develops

9 to 12 months *(continued)*

- Always use an approved baby capsule or child car seat when travelling. Not securing your baby can lead to fines and demerit points.
 - Keep your baby in a rear-facing car seat as long as possible. While the rule says 6 months, experts recommend keeping them rear-facing for at least 12 months.
 - Never leave your baby alone in a car, even for a minute.
 - Never leave your baby alone during bath time.
 - Keep small objects out of reach to prevent choking. This includes pins, button batteries, small magnets, dead insects, buttons, beads, nuts, coins and other small items. Cigarette butts, vapes and even small amounts of alcohol are harmful.
 - Use a playpen for short periods to help your baby learn safety limits.
- Cigarette smoke and vapour from vapes are harmful. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car with a child under 16 years of age present. The best thing to do is quit smoking. Contact Quitline on 13 78 48 for help.
- Use safety barriers for steps, stairs and rooms you don't want your child to enter. Keep them away from fireplaces, heaters, hot ovens, swimming pools and dams.
 - Check your home and garden for drowning hazards. Keep bathroom and toilet doors closed. Place nappy buckets high and secure the lid. It takes 5 cm of water and 2 minutes for a child to drown.
 - Ensure the pool fence and gates work and you never leave them open.
 - Keep kettle and iron cords out of reach. Use stove and bench guards and curly cords to prevent children from pulling hot food and drinks. Turn saucepan handles to the back of the stove. Don't leave hot drinks or food unattended or in your baby's reach.
 - Cover power points when not in use.
 - Circuit breakers save lives and should be installed by an electrician.
 - Make sure low cupboards have child-resistant latches.
 - Check that furniture, like coffee tables are sturdy enough for your child to pull themselves up.
 - Strap your TV to the wall or to a stable TV cabinet.

How your baby develops

- Secure free-standing bookshelves, cupboards and drawers to the walls.
- Don't place pretty objects or toys on top of furniture that might encourage climbing.
- Store medicines, cleaning supplies, and sharp items out of reach or in a cupboard with a child-resistant latch.
- Keep dangerous objects, like heaters and fans out of reach.
- Keep the bathroom door closed so your child can't touch the hot taps. Lower the water temperature to avoid burns. Install hot water regulators or thermostats on all bath hot water taps.
- Don't give them small, hard foods such as raw pieces of apple, carrot, whole grapes, popcorn or nuts as they can choke on these.
- Make sure your baby is sleeping safely, following the advice on pages 6-8.
- If your baby swallows something dangerous, or you think they have swallowed or inserted a button battery, immediately call the 24 hour Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for fast expert advice. If this is not possible go straight to the hospital emergency.

Outdoor Safety

- Make sure there are safe play areas outside. Check for harmful objects, plants, insects and animals like:
 - Garden tools
 - Protruding branches
 - Garden fertilisers or chemicals
 - Pool chemicals
 - Poisonous plants and mushrooms (especially after rain).
- Ensure play areas are shady and fenced off from the pool, roads and driveways.
- Don't use baby walkers or baby jumpers (jolly jumpers). They are not needed for your baby to develop in a healthy way.
- Dress children in nightwear made with fabric that is slow to burn. Look for low fire risk danger ratings on the tag.

Taking care of your baby's teeth

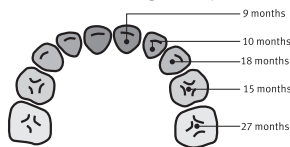
Baby teeth are essential

Healthy teeth help kids to:

- Eat good food.
- Speak properly.
- Have a nice smile.

Baby teeth also keep space for adult teeth. Losing a baby tooth too early can make adult teeth crowded.

This chart is a guide to when baby teeth appear. The timing of teeth coming through can be different.



Taking care of baby teeth

Start cleaning your baby's teeth as soon as they appear. Do this twice a day to remove plaque which can cause decay (holes).

Use a small soft toothbrush with water at first. If your baby doesn't like the toothbrush, use a soft cloth to clean their teeth and gums.

At 18 months, use a small amount of children's toothpaste with low fluoride.

For more info on oral health, go to www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth

Tips for brushing

Don't rinse your baby's mouth or give foods or drinks (including water) right after brushing.

Keep toothpaste out of reach of children.

Parents should help with brushing until kids are about 8 years old.

Fluoride

Fluoride helps prevent decay. Use fluoride toothpaste and drink fluoridated water. If your water doesn't have fluoride ask your dentist or dental professional for advice. Your Local Council will be able to tell you if your local water supply is fluoridated.

Teething

Common teething problems include:

- Red, swollen gums
- Irritability and restlessness
- Drooling
- Chewing on fingers or fists
- Flushed cheeks

To help with teething let your baby chew on bread crusts, chilled fruits or vegetables like cucumber, carrot, apple, rusks or chilled teething rings. You can also gently rub their gums with a clean finger.

Teething does not cause fever.

Taking care of your baby's teeth

Baby tooth decay

Infant tooth decay can start as soon as teeth appear. It looks like brown or white spots on the teeth that don't rub off. It can cause pain and make it hard for young children to eat.

How to prevent baby tooth decay:

- **Avoid sugary drinks:** Don't give babies bottles with drinks like juice, cordial or soft drinks.
- **Feeding tips:** Don't feed your baby while they are lying down or let them sleep with a bottle in their mouth. This can cause tooth decay and ear infections.
- **Dental checkups:** Have your baby's teeth checked by a dental practitioner before they turn two, or earlier if you have concerns. Some areas offer checks by a child health nurse.

Your mouth and baby tooth decay

Newborn babies don't have germs in their mouths when they are born. They can get decay causing germs from others by sharing spoons or cleaning teats or dummies with your mouth.

- **Take care of your teeth:** Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and visit the dentist regularly to avoid spreading germs to your baby.

Tips to prevent tooth decay

- **Breastfeeding:** It's best for your baby.
- **Bottle contents:** Only put breastmilk, formula or water in your baby's bottle.
- Don't leave your baby alone to drink a bottle and don't put them to bed with a bottle.
- **Avoid sweetened dummies:** Don't sweeten or flavour dummies. Check them for rips and replace if needed. Stop using dummies by age 3. This helps babies learn to talk.
- **No sharing:** Don't put anything in your baby's mouth if it has been in someone else's mouth.
- **Introduce a cup:** Start using a cup at about 6 months and stop bottle use by 12 months.
- **Clean teeth early:** Clean your baby's teeth with a small, soft toothbrush as soon as they appear. Use low-fluoride toothpaste from 18 months.
- **Family oral health:** Keep the whole family's teeth healthy to reduce the risk of spreading bacteria to your baby.
- **Dental check:** Make sure your child has a dental check up by their second birthday.
- **Remember:** Infant tooth decay can be avoided. If you think your baby has tooth decay, or you need more info contact your dental practitioner.

Taking care of your baby's ears

Ear and hearing health

Healthy hearing is important to your baby's speech and language development. Speech and language development starts from birth. If you are worried about your baby's speech or language, talk to your doctor, child health nurse or health worker.

Newborn hearing screen

- **Hearing loss:** 1 to 2 out of every 1000 babies has a major hearing loss.
- **Screening:** All babies are offered a hearing screening after birth. This is done in hospital or after discharge home.
- **Results:** Your baby will get a 'Pass' or 'Refer' result for each ear. Pass - your baby has enough hearing for normal speech development. Refer – a refer result on a second screen means your baby's hearing needs more testing. This is completed by an audiologist.
- **Risk factors:** Some babies have conditions that cause hearing loss to develop later. These babies need more checks with an audiologist before their first birthday.
- You can find results and risk factor information recorded in your baby's PHR.
- **Healthy Hearing Family Support (HHFS):** If your baby has a Refer result on a second screen, they are referred to HHFS. This team gives support to families when a baby is diagnosed with a Permanent Childhood Hearing Loss.

- Other health professionals including local services will give support and treatment if your baby is diagnosed with a hearing loss.

Ongoing: Hearing can change at any time. Even if your baby passes the hearing screen, watch your baby's hearing development. Talk to your doctor if you think your baby has a problem with their hearing.

Middle ear infections:

- **Watch for:** Crying, fever, tugging at the ear or discharge from the ear. Your baby might not respond to sounds or turn to your voice.
- More than three ear infections in a year can be serious.
- **Frequent ear infections:** When babies have lots of ear infections it can lead to hearing loss. This can affect how babies talk, learn and play.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies are at higher risk for ear problems. Have your baby's ears checked every time you are at a health clinic. The health clinic can help you learn how to prevent, recognise and treat ear infections.
- **Remember:** Healthy hearing is needed for your baby's development. If you have any concerns, talk to your doctor or audiologist.

Taking care of your baby's ears

How to prevent and detect ear and hearing problems

- **Breastfeeding:** Breastfeed if possible.
- **Immunisation:** Make sure your baby has their immunisations on time to prevent illness.
- **No smoking or vaping:** Don't smoke or vape around your baby.
- **Clean hands and face:** Make sure family and friends wash their hands and face before playing with or kissing your baby.
- **Use tissues:** Use tissues to wipe baby's nose and throw used tissues in the bin. Remember to wash your hands after.
- **Check your baby's speech and hearing:** Use the Healthy Hearing Checklist.
- **Regular ear checks:** Get your baby's ears checked often by a child health nurse, health worker or doctor.
- **Noise:** If you must raise your voice over the noise of a toy, the TV or other noise, then it could be damaging your babies hearing.

Why it's crucial:

Early detection helps babies and children have enough hearing to talk, learn and play. If your baby shows any signs of ear problems or doesn't meet the healthy hearing checklist, take them to a health professional for a checkup.

Look for signs of ear problems:

- Your baby is not responding well to sounds.
- Runny nose, fever, coughing or sneezing.
- Your baby pulling at their ears or having painful ears.
- Pus or runny fluid from the ear.
- Unsettled baby.

Healthy hearing checklist for babies:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Birth to 3 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Settles to familiar sounds or voices• Is startled or jumps when there is a sudden noise |
| 3 to 6 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turns head or eyes toward interesting sounds• Appears to listen• Wakes easily to sound• Starts to make speech-like sounds |
| 6 to 12 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands simple words such as 'no' and 'bye-bye'• Begins to copy speech sounds• Turns head to soft sounds |

When your child is sick

When young children get sick it can cause parents to worry. It's crucial to know the difference between a serious illness and a minor one.

Parents should learn to spot the signs of illness early so that they can get help quickly. Babies and young children can get worse more quickly than older kids.

Sickness

Most illnesses in young children come with a fever (temperature above 38 °C), but not all children with a fever will be sick. Acute infection is usual. But you know your child best, so trust your gut feeling.

Here are some questions to think about:

- Is my baby not feeding?
- Is my child unhappy?
- Is my child lying around, not interested in playing or their surroundings?
- Is my child very thirsty and has more wee than usual?

What to watch for

Look for other signs if your child is unwell, especially in babies and young children.

- **Drowsiness and loss of interest:** Your child may be less alert and not interested in what is going on around them. They might just want you to cuddle them. They may be 'floppy'.

- **Breathing difficulty:** Breathing might be noisy, rapid, or shallow. Or they may take long pauses between breaths. The baby might make a grunting noise, or their ribs or breastbone might be sucked in with each breath.
- **Poor feeding or loss of appetite:** The baby or child might suck less strongly, for shorter periods or refuse feeds. This is serious if a baby takes less than half the normal amount of feed in a 24-hour period.
- **Poor urine output:** Less than four wet nappies in a 24-hour period is a concern. For older children, there will be less wee and it will be darker in colour.
- **Change in skin colour:** The child might be pale, have mottled skin, a rash or cold hands and feet.
- **Change in poo:** Loose poos, no poos, blood in poos or change in colour of poos.
- **Redness around the ears or discharge:** The baby might pull at their ears because of pain. There might be runny fluid or pus coming from the ear.

It's vital to get medical help quickly if you notice any of the signs of sickness in this list, especially if several happen at the same time.

When your child is sick

When to see the doctor

It's vital to get medical help quickly if:

- You notice any of the signs of sickness listed on the previous page, especially if several happen at the same time.
- You have a young baby who seems unwell.
- You are worried about your child.

You should also get help if your child:

- Has a convulsion or fit.
- Has a fever more than 38 °C (if the baby is 3 months or younger).
- Vomits often for hours or vomits green fluid or blood.
- Has a lot of pain not relieved by paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Stops breathing.
- Has a bad headache, stiff neck or light hurts their eyes.

You can get more help by calling 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Fever

A fever is when the body's temperature goes up.

Fevers are the body's way of fighting infection. Infection could be because of a virus or bacteria. Sometimes it is hard to tell which one is causing the fever. Tips to follow if your child has a fever:

- Keep your child resting and comfortable.
- Remove extra blankets and clothing and keep your child lightly dressed.

- If your child shivers this could lead to an increase in their temperature. Keep monitoring their temperature. Wrap them in a light blanket until the shivering stops.
- If your child is under 6 months, give them extra breastfeeds, bottles or cooled boiled water. For older children give frequent small drinks of clear fluid (like water or diluted fruit juice — one part juice to four parts water). A child with a fever will be thirsty and can drink as much as they want if they're not vomiting.
- Check your child's temperature with an axillary or tympanic thermometer if they feel warm. Infrared or plastic tape thermometers are not accurate.

For more info

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/health-a-to-z/fever

Medication

Always check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist before giving your child any medications, including complementary medicines and vitamins.

Your baby can use paracetamol from birth. You can use ibuprofen for babies over 3 months to manage:

- Fevers above 38°C if the child is irritable or in pain (there is no need to treat a fever if your child is well and happy).
- Discomfort or mild temperature after needles.
- Irritability with teething.

When your child is sick

Do not give aspirin to a child unless a doctor tells you to.

If you think you have given too much medication, call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.

How much and how to give

There are many brands and strengths of medications so always follow the instructions on the box for your child's age and weight.

If there are two different doses recommended (one for weight, one for age) always give the lowest dose.

Do not combine medications unless advised by a health professional.

Read the bottle carefully: Before giving your child a dose. Use the oral syringe provided or buy one from your local pharmacy. If you are unsure ask the pharmacist.

Record doses given: To keep track of medication usage. This is vital if there are two or more carers (for example Mum and Dad) to avoid accidental overdose.

Do not use paracetamol or ibuprofen for more than 48 hours: After 48 hours, talk to a doctor.

Mixing medication: Use a small amount of breastmilk or formula but never add medication to a full bottle. The baby may not get the full dose if they don't drink the whole bottle or refuse to feed.

Paracetamol

Safe to use from birth. A dose can be given every 4–6 hours. Do not exceed 4 doses in 24 hours.

Ibuprofen

Only used in children over 3 months old unless recommended by your paediatrician.

Precautions are required, so contact your doctor or pharmacist before giving it to your child.

A dose can be given up to every 6–8 hours. Do not exceed 3 doses in 24 hours. Give with food or after breast or bottle feeding to reduce the risk of stomach upset.

Remember

All children need extra care and attention when they are sick. Keeping them at rest and at home can help them recover and will decrease the risk of spreading infection.

Young children don't know why they feel sick and may be irritable and upset. Your kind, gentle comfort and support are what your child needs.

Illnesses can change over time so trust your gut. Even if your child has seen a doctor recently, it's ok to go back if your child is getting worse or not getting better.

When your child is sick

Could this be sepsis?

Sepsis happens when the body has an extreme response to an infection and starts to damage its own tissues and organs. **Sepsis is a medical emergency** and needs immediate treatment.

While fevers are the body's response to fighting infection, any infection can lead to sepsis. It is important to know the signs of deterioration. If your child has any ONE of these symptoms it may mean your child is very unwell and could have sepsis.

Remember you know your child best so **trust your gut**.

Illnesses can change so even if you have recently seen a doctor, if your child is more unwell than ever before go back to hospital and ask your doctor or nurse "**Could this be sepsis?**".

Scan the QR code and tick the boxes that apply to your child and ask your doctor or nurse "**Could this be sepsis?**".



Breastfeeding

Best for baby and for Mum

Breastmilk is the perfect way to nourish babies. It's natural, free and good for the earth. Breastfeeding gives your baby the best start in life. Support from family and friends helps a lot in starting and continuing to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding is more than providing food for your baby. It helps you bond with your baby. Your baby can feel, smell and see you. This builds a special relationship.

Breastmilk has all the nutrients your baby needs. It's made just for your baby's growing body.

Breastfeeding takes time to learn for both you and your baby. It might be hard at first, but it's good for both you and your baby. With the right help you can both learn this new skill. There is lots of support available to you.

Australian Breastfeeding Association 24-hour/7-day free Breastfeeding helpline 1800 mum/1800 686 268

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Breastfeeding (Good for Baby, Good for Mum)

www.health.qld.gov.au/good_for_baby_mum.pdf

Grow and Go Toolbox – helping feed under fives

www.growandgotoolbox.com

Benefits for your baby

Breastmilk not only nourishes your baby but also helps prevent infections and diseases like:

- ear infections, which can lead to hearing loss
- urinary tract infections
- diarrhoea
- eczema and asthma
- inflammatory bowel disease
- some childhood cancers
- sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI)
- type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- obesity in childhood and later life
- heart disease in later life.

Breastfeeding also helps with jaw development and reduces the risk of allergies and food intolerances, like coeliac disease.

Breastfed babies are less likely to get sick and go to hospital than formula-fed babies.

Breastfeeding

Benefits for you

- Breastfeeding helps your uterus go back to its normal size faster.
- It can help you lose weight after having your baby.
- It lowers the risk of getting ovarian cancer and breast cancer before menopause.
- It lowers the risk of getting osteoporosis.
- It lowers the risk of mothers with gestational diabetes getting type 2 diabetes.

Convenient, safe and natural

- Breastmilk is always ready, fresh, clean and safe.
- It's the only food your baby needs for the first 6 months.
- It's still good for your baby even after 12 months.
- It saves time because you don't need to make formula or clean bottles.

Breastfeeding in public

Breastfeeding in public is legal. You can breastfeed in places like shopping centres, restaurants, hotels and on public transport.

For more info visit:

Queensland Human Rights Commission

www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-rights/discrimination-law/breastfeeding

Australian Breastfeeding Association

www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/breastfeeding-and-law

Breastfeeding

Getting started with breastfeeding

When do I start breastfeeding?

Start breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth. Most babies are ready to feed in the first hour. Hold your baby close, skin-to-skin and they will start looking for milk. Your body has already made colostrum, the first milk, it is perfect for your newborn.

How does my body produce milk?

During pregnancy, your body makes colostrum, a thick, yellowish fluid. As you keep breastfeeding, colostrum changes into mature breastmilk. Breastmilk is always just right for your baby. It might look pale blue but it has all the nutrients your baby needs.

When your baby starts sucking, you might feel a tingling or tightening sensation in your breasts. This is called 'let-down' or 'milk-ejection'. It can happen at other times too like when you hear your baby cry. Not all mums feel this but you can see it by watching your baby's sucking and swallowing.

The more you breastfeed the more milk your body makes.

What do I need to help me to breastfeed?

For breastfeeding info:

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

www.qld.gov.au/health/children/babies/breastfeeding/

www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding

or ask your midwife, doctor or child health nurse.

- Join a breastfeeding support group and talk to other mothers.
- Find out what breastfeeding support is in your area before you leave hospital. Child health clinics, lactation consultants, the Australian Breastfeeding Association and post-discharge services can offer help.
- Try to sleep or rest when your baby sleeps.
- Accept help with housework and meals from your partner, family and friends. Let them know how breastfeeding helps you and your baby so they can support you.
- Do only the essential housework.
- Eat many nutritious foods. (see "What should I eat?" on the next page). Avoiding certain foods won't prevent allergies or alter your baby's "wind". Stay active and eat according to your energy needs.
- Drink water whenever you're thirsty. A good habit is to drink water every time your baby feeds. Carry water when you go out so you can keep on top of your thirst.

Breastfeeding

- Avoid cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, coffee and cola. If it's hard to stop, talk to your health professional for advice. These can pass to your baby through breastmilk. If you do have them, do it after a breastfeed not before.
- If you need medication, ask your doctor for ones that are safe while breastfeeding.
- Make sure you are comfortable before you start feeding.
- Your baby might need to feed often in the first weeks. As they grow, they will feed less often. Follow your babies cues for feeding, not the clock.
- Breastfeeding at night is normal and needed for babies.
- Get to know your baby by cuddling and watching their cues. Let your baby guide you on when to feed.
- If you plan to go back to work, talk to your employer about working and breastfeeding. For more info go to: www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/returning-work-options

What should I eat?

When pregnant and breastfeeding, you need a lot of nutrients, so it's great to eat healthy foods. This helps you and your baby stay healthy. Eat many types of foods from these groups every day:

- Grains like wholegrain bread and cereals.
- Vegetables and beans.
- Fruit.
- Lean meats, chicken, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, seeds and beans.
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives, mainly reduced fat.

Take an iodine supplement of 150 micrograms each day during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Iodine helps your baby's brain and nervous system develop. If you have a thyroid condition, check with your doctor first.

If you follow a special diet like vegetarian or vegan, you might need extra advice from a dietitian or nutritionist.

Breastfeeding mothers need to drink plenty of fluids, especially in warm weather. Water is the best drink.

Breastfeeding

Getting started with breastfeeding (continued)

How do I help get milk flow started?

There are some things you can do to help your breastmilk flow:

- Relax. Breathe deeply, lower your shoulders, get a back rub, and enjoy this special time with your baby.
- Have a warm shower or put a warm washer on your breast.
- Gently massage your breast towards the nipple.
- Express a small amount of breastmilk just before feeding.

Breastfeeding is a skill that takes time to learn. Many women have some difficulties, especially at the start. If you have concerns, or need help, talk to a health professional. Solving problems early can make breastfeeding more enjoyable and help you continue longer.

For more information or support

In hospital

Talk to a midwife or lactation consultant.

At home

Talk to your local child health nurse, a lactation consultant, an Australian Breastfeeding Association counsellor or your GP.

For more info

13 HEALTH (24-hour hotline) 13 43 25 84. Families can speak with a child health nurse from 6:30am to 11:00pm every day.

Australian Breastfeeding Association 24-hour/7-day free Breastfeeding helpline 1800 mum 2 mum/ 1800 686 268
Queensland Branch (07) 3254 2233

- Grow and Go Toolbox – helping feed under fives
www.growandgotoolbox.com
www.breastfeeding.asn.au or scan QR code



- Queensland Health Breastfeeding
www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding or scan QR code



Breastfeeding

- Relax and get comfortable.
- Have skin to skin contact with your baby before breastfeeding.
- Hold your baby close with their chest against yours.
- Let your baby's head tilt back a bit to help them open their mouth wide.
- Bring your baby to your breast, not **your** breast to your baby.
- Your baby's top lip should be level with your nipple.
- Your nipple and a large part of your breast should be in your baby's mouth.
- After a quick burst of sucking, the rhythm will slow down. Pauses are normal and will happen more as the feed goes on.
- Make sure your baby's nose is not blocked by the breast.

Attached correctly?

Correct attachment and positioning are crucial to avoid problems.

- If your baby's cheeks are sucked in or you hear a 'clicking' sound, they are not attached properly.
- If it hurts when your baby sucks, or you think they are not attached well, gently put your finger in their mouth to break the suction. Don't just pull your baby off as it will hurt. Try attaching again.
- Breastfeeding should not be painful. Some women feel nipple sensitivity and tenderness in the first few days.
- Watch and listen to your baby during feeding. They should look comfortable and relaxed, not tense or frowning.
- After feeding, your nipples might look a bit longer but should not be squashed, flat, white or ridged.

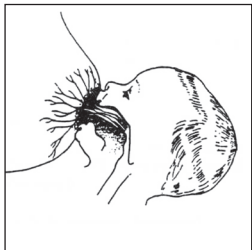
Remember, attachment gets easier with time.

Breastfeeding

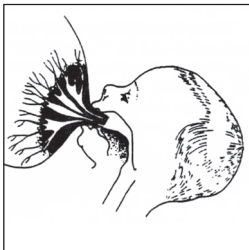
How do I start to breastfeed?

Good and poor attachment

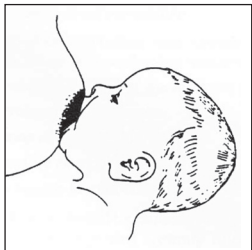
Good attachment
inside appearance



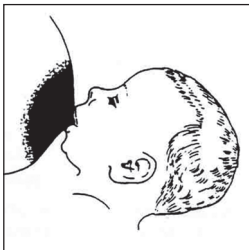
Poor attachment
inside appearance



Good attachment
outside appearance



Poor attachment
outside appearance



Source: World Health Organisation, Breastfeeding Counselling: A Training Course, 1993, UNICEF, New York. Reproduced by permission.

Remember

If breastfeeding hurts something might be wrong. Your local child health nurse, Australian Breastfeeding Association, lactation consultant or midwife can help you.

About nipple shields

Nipple shields are used for a short time to help with cracked, painful, inverted or flat nipples. If you leave the hospital using a nipple shield, get help from a breastfeeding professional within a few days. This help will support your milk supply and breastfeeding attachment.

How often should I breastfeed my baby?

- Babies need to feed often, about 8–12 feeds in 24 hours. Every mother and baby are different. With patience, you and your baby will find your own pattern that changes as your baby grows. Feed your baby when they show signs they are hungry.
- Your baby knows when they are hungry so feed them when they need it.
- Feeding times can be different for each baby and each feed. As babies get older and better at sucking, they often feed faster and sleep longer between feeds.
- It's normal for babies to breastfeed often, both day and night.
- Breastmilk is the perfect food for babies.

Breastfeeding

How often should I breastfeed my baby?

- Breastmilk is easy to digest, so it can leave your baby's stomach in 90 minutes. This means some babies need to feed often.
- In warm weather, babies might want to breastfeed more. You don't need to give them water, just breastmilk.
- Let your baby finish feeding from one breast before offering the other. At the next feed, start with the other breast.
- It is okay to give your baby an extra feed to calm them.
- Let your baby feed as long as they want. Some babies take breaks and then start sucking again. Let your baby decide when to stop. Try to keep feeds under one hour.

Tip

If your baby regularly feeds for more than one hour, it might mean there's a feeding problem like incorrect attachment. Get help from your child health nurse or the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?

- **Feeding:** Breastfed babies usually feed 8–12 times in 24-hours.
- **Swallowing:** Watch for frequent swallowing. Swallowing after 1–3 sucks is normal.
- **Nappies:** In the first few days checking your newborn's wet and dirty nappies can help you to see if they are getting enough milk. For more info: www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/health-a-to-z/breastfeeding/is-my-baby-getting-enough-breast-milk
- **Wet nappies:** After your milk comes in (4–6 days) baby should have at least 6–8 wet cloth nappies or 5–7 wet disposable nappies in 24 hours. Their wee should be pale.
- **Dirty nappies:** Breastfed babies usually have loose, mustard yellow bowel motions. They can sometimes be green or orange. If you are worried, talk to a health professional. None of these changes are a problem in a healthy breastfed baby. They will be different to the bowel motions of formula fed babies.
- **Bowel motions:** The number of bowel motions decrease between 6 weeks and 3 months in a breastfed baby. It's normal for several days to pass between stools.
- **Runny stools:** Frequent, runny stools do not mean a breastfed baby has diarrhoea or lactose intolerance. This means your baby is getting enough milk. If you are worried, talk to a health professional.
- **Appearance:** Your baby should have bright eyes, a moist mouth and good colour.
- **Contentment:** Your baby should be content after feeding. Most babies have an unsettled period somewhere in a day. This does not mean you are running out of milk.

Breastfeeding

Is my baby getting enough milk? (continued)

- **Weight gain:** Your baby should gain weight well. Babies lose weight shortly after birth. They start to regain by day 4–6 and should regain their birth weight by 2 weeks. Regularly check your baby's growth and note it in their PHR. Your child's growth pattern follows the line on the graph of the growth chart. A baby who is gaining weight is getting enough breastmilk.
 - A one-off unusual measurement is not usually a cause for concern if your baby is content and healthy. A decision on your baby's growth is best made only after a series of measurements.
 - Always use the same baby scales. Weigh without clothes and nappy (or always with a dry nappy).
 - Growth monitoring is best done by a doctor or child health nurse who can discuss your child's growth and development with you and answer your questions. The doctor or nurse will consider both weight and length measurements in combination.
- Remember**
- **Breast softness:** Your breasts may feel softer once your body gets used to breastfeeding. This doesn't mean you have less milk. Your milk supply has adjusted to your baby's needs.
 - **Breast size:** The size of your breasts doesn't alter how much milk you can make.
 - **Self-Care:** Take care of you. Eat healthy meals from the five food groups. Drink when you are thirsty. Try to drink a glass of water at every breastfeed.
 - **Feeding schedule:** Your baby can't tell the time. In the first months, babies don't always get hungry at the same time each day. Don't feed on a schedule — feed when your baby needs it.
 - **Milk production:** Your breasts make more milk when they are stimulated often. If your baby uses a dummy or bottle, they might not feed from you as often and your milk supply could decrease.
 - **Feeding frequency:** How often and how long your baby needs to feed can be different for each baby.
 - **Milk supply:** The more you feed, the more milk you make.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Breastfeeding in the first 6 to 8 weeks

Sleepy baby

Some babies might be sleepy because of:

- long labours or surgery.
- anaesthetics and other drugs given during labour.

The first 72 hours is vital for starting breastmilk production. It's easier to respond to your baby's feeding cues if they are in the same room as you. During the day, if your baby doesn't ask for a feed after about 5 hours, you can wake them and offer a breast feed. Your baby should have at least 6 (but preferably 8–10) breastfeeds in 24 hours.

Tips:

- Allow skin to skin contact between you and your baby.
- Change your baby's nappy.
- Express a little colostrum and give it by teaspoon, syringe or cup to encourage them to seek your breast.
- Unwrap your baby, talk to them and gently stroke their legs and tummy.
- Stroke their lip and cheek.
- Cuddle your baby against your breast.
- If your baby is too sleepy to accept your breast, express your colostrum and offer it to them. If your baby continues to be sleepy and you are worried, talk to your GP or breastfeeding trained health professional.
- Jaundice may make your baby sleepy. Talk to your doctor, or child health nurse if you are concerned about jaundice.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Breastfeeding in the first 6 to 8 weeks (continued)

Unsettled baby

Babies cry for many reasons. It's their way of communicating.

Crying: Babies cry with their whole bodies including their legs. This is often mistaken for wind.

Unsettled periods: It is normal for babies to have **at least** one unsettled period each day. It's usually in the evening but can happen at any time. During these times your baby may want to feed frequently and seem to be snacking. This often worries mothers about their milk supply but it's rarely the problem. Feeding frequently helps you have enough milk supply for the next day. Don't offer formula as it can upset the balance. As you get to know your baby better you will learn skills to manage these times.

See 'Is my baby getting enough milk?' on page 47 if you are worried about your milk supply.

Regurgitation: This is common and happens in about 40% of babies under 3 months. Most babies with regurgitation or reflux are healthy and grow well. By 6–10 months, as your baby spends more time upright, regurgitation usually settles. Breastfeeding doesn't cause regurgitation, colic or reflux.

Winding: Winding helps wake a baby for the rest of the feed. You don't need to wait for a burp before continuing the feed or settling your baby to sleep.

For more info

- 13 HEALTH (24-hour hotline) 13 43 25 84. Families can speak with a child health nurse from 6:30am to 11:00pm every day.
- Australian Breastfeeding Association 24-hour/7-day free Breastfeeding helpline 1800 mum 2 mum or 1800 686 268
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Common breastfeeding concerns

Common early problems – tender or cracked nipples

Tender nipples

Some nipple tenderness is normal at the start of feeds in the first 1–2 weeks. After these early days, incorrect attachment is the most common cause of nipple pain.

Tips

- Wash your hands well before handling your breasts.
- If you use breast pads, change them when they are wet.
- Avoid using highly perfumed shampoos and soaps.
- When taking your baby off your breast, break the suction with your little finger in the corner of your baby's mouth.
- Expose your nipples to the air after each feed.
- Let breastmilk dry on your nipples after each feed as it helps protect against infection.
- Generally, avoid applying ointments, sprays, tinctures and powders.

Cracked nipples

Tips

- Seek help from your child health nurse, an Australian Breastfeeding Association counsellor or other breastfeeding trained health professional.
- Poor attachment is the most common cause of cracked nipples.
- Follow the tips for tender nipples.
- If it's too painful to breastfeed, avoid feeding on the sore breast for 12–24 hours but express milk during this time.
- Express milk by hand or with a good quality breast pump on a gentle setting. Make sure the breast pump shields fit well and aren't too big or small.
- Gently remove breast pads to stop more damage to your nipples. If the pad sticks, express a little breastmilk to moisten it before removing it.
- Put expressed breastmilk on nipples after feeds to help them heal.
- Let your nipples air dry.
- Studies suggests that nipple cream is usually not effective.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Localised breast swelling and mastitis (blocked ducts)

What is it?

Sometimes, your breast can get sore and swollen because the milk ducts (small tubes that carry milk to your nipple) get blocked or narrow.

Signs of localised breast swelling:

- Redness, hardness, and pain in the breast.
- A painful white spot on the nipple.
- Thick or fatty-looking milk.

Mastitis

Mastitis is when your breast gets inflamed or infected. There are two types of mastitis: inflammatory and bacterial.

Inflammatory mastitis

- Redness, hardness, and pain in the breast that gets worse
- General symptoms like fever, chills, and fast heart rate

Bacterial mastitis

- Redness, hardness, and pain in a specific area of the breast that gets worse
- Fever and fast heart rate that continues to last longer than 24 hours

When to see a doctor

If your symptoms don't get better after 24 hours, see a doctor.

Treatment

- Use a covered cold pack on the sore breast between feeding your baby to reduce swelling.
- Keep feeding your baby when they want to feed. You don't need to empty your breast. If you are expressing milk, continue with your usual routine.
- Gentle massage towards your armpit can help reduce swelling. Don't massage too hard, as it can make it worse.

Medications

- Anti-inflammatory medicines like ibuprofen, can help with pain, redness and swelling.
- You can take paracetamol with ibuprofen. Always follow the instructions on the packaging. Ask your GP or pharmacist if you need help.
- Sunflower or soy lecithin (5-10grams daily) may help reduce the inflammation. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist for help.
- If you do need antibiotics for a breast infection, it's usually safe to keep breastfeeding or expressing milk. Talk to your doctor and pharmacist to be sure. Think about taking a probiotic after finishing your antibiotics to help with your gut health.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Taking care of you

Before breastfeeding or expressing:

- Gently massage your breast.
- If needed, hand express a little milk to soften the area around the nipple to help your baby latch on.

While breastfeeding or expressing:

- Keep massaging gently.
- You might get less milk from the sore breast for a while.
- Your milk might taste different which could make your baby fussy.
- Make sure the breast pump fits well and is in the right position.
- Your baby needs to latch on well.

If you need support with breastfeeding or expressing, contact your local child health nurse, a lactation consultant or the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

After breastfeeding or expressing:

- Use a cold pack on the sore breast for up to 10 minutes. You can do this every hour if needed.
- If you need to, express a little milk to stay comfortable.
- Even after swelling goes down, your breast might still be a bit sore for a few days.

Preventing blocked ducts:

- Wear a supportive bra that fits well.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach.
- Don't go too long without breastfeeding or expressing.
- Drink lots of water and rest when you can.
- Breastfeed as often as your baby needs (about 8-12 times in 24 hours).
- Don't breastfeed or express more than usual if you already have too much milk.

Tips:

- Keep feeding your baby when they want to feed, you don't need to empty your breast.
- If you are using expressed milk keep your regular expressing routine.
- When you feed baby or express, milk is removed from your breast. Your body then makes more milk to replace it, which can cause more swelling.
- See your doctor if you start to feel unwell and you don't feel better after 24 hours. You might have mastitis.

For more info

www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/mastitis

www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding/breastfeeding-challenges/blocked-duct-mastitis-abscess

Common breastfeeding concerns

When do I stop breastfeeding?

Breastmilk gives your baby all the nutrients they need for the first 6 months. After that babies need solid food along with breastmilk.

Experts all recommend breastfeeding until your baby is at least 12 months old. You can continue after 12 months if it works for you and your baby.

As your baby gets older, you may experience the following concerns. Here are some tips to help you to keep breastfeeding.

Common concerns and tips

Low milk supply

- The more you breastfeed, the more milk you make.
- Offer the breast between the usual feeds.
- Use the breast as a comforter instead of a dummy.
- Feed from each breast more than once per feed.
- Express milk between feeds.

Teething

- Teeth might make feeding feel different but shouldn't hurt.
- If your baby bites, take them off the breast and try again later.
- Your baby will learn not to bite during feeding.

Distractions

- Older babies might get distracted and stop feeding to look around.
- Try feeding in a quiet room with fewer distractions.

Breast refusal

- Sometimes babies refuse the breast. This is usually temporary.
- Causes can be a cold, teething or changes in your hormones, medications or perfume.
- Find and fix the problem. If it continues, get help from a child health nurse, an Australian Breastfeeding Association counsellor, lactation consultant or other breastfeeding trained professional.

Your period

- Your baby might be fussier when your period returns but this will pass in a few days.

Support and help

If you need help talk to a child health nurse, a breastfeeding counsellor or a lactation consultant, check the sources listed on page 42.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Tips for stopping breastfeeding

- **Wean gradually:** Stop breastfeeding slowly over several weeks or months. This helps both you and your baby adjust.
- **Follow your baby's lead:** Start by stopping the feed your baby is least interested in.
- **For babies under 6 months:** Replace missed breastfeeds with expressed breastmilk or infant formula.
- **For babies over 6 months:** You can wean them onto a cup instead of a bottle. Try to stop using bottles by 12 months.
- **Older babies:** Replace breastfeeds with foods or drinks suitable for their age. Check the "Introducing solid foods" in this booklet from page 67 for the different age groups.
- **Engorged breasts:** If your breasts feel full, try not to express too much milk. Just express a little to feel comfortable and to reduce the chance of getting mastitis.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Medicines and breastfeeding

Medicines and breastfeeding

Medicines a mother takes pass into breastmilk but usually in small amounts. This depends on the type of medicine, the fat in the breastmilk and how much medicine is in the mother's body.

Most prescribed medicines are safe for breastfeeding mothers. Always check with your pharmacist or doctor before taking any medicines. This includes prescription medicines and vitamins, minerals, and herbal products.

www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/child-health/babies-and-toddlers/breastfeeding-and-drugs

Recreational drugs

- Recreational drugs can pass into breastmilk and may harm the baby. Contact Alcohol and Drug Services 24 hours, 7 days on 1800 177 833 or **www.adis.health.qld.gov.au** for more info.

Checking medicine safety

- Use this booklet to see which common medicines are safe.
- For more advice talk to your pharmacist, doctor or child health nurse and tell them you are breastfeeding.
- You can call the Medicines Line on 1300 MEDICINE (1300 633 424) from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm AEST.

Keep breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding is the best way to feed babies and has many benefits for both you and your baby.
- Only stop breastfeeding if there is strong evidence that a medicine will harm the baby and there is no other treatment option.

Choosing the right medicine

- Talk to your doctor about the safest medicine for you and your baby.
- Your doctor will explain the risks and benefits of the medicine and adjust your treatment if needed.
- Ask your pharmacist when to take your medicine to reduce your baby's exposure.

Medicine exposure in the womb

- Babies get more medicine in the womb than through breastfeeding.
- If you took medicines during pregnancy, tell your doctor. Your baby's doctor can watch for side effects.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Medicines for headache, aches, pain or fever

- **Paracetamol:** Safe to take while breastfeeding if used as directed.
- **Aspirin:** Usually not recommended during breastfeeding. Low dose aspirin may be prescribed by your doctor for specific conditions.
- **Anti-inflammatory drugs and diclofenac:** Good for period or muscle pain. Use in low doses for short periods. Talk to your doctor if your pain is severe.
- **Creams and sprays:** Safe for muscle aches and pains. Avoid using on the chest area to stop babies from ingesting it.

Medicines to avoid

- **Mefenamic acid and indomethacin:** Best avoided. Other anti-inflammatory medicines are preferred.

Cold, flu and asthma medicines

- **Avoid cold and flu tablets with pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine:** These can make babies irritable and reduce milk supply.
- **Decongestant nasal sprays:** A safer option. Ask your pharmacist for help.
- **Lozenges and gargles:** Safe for sore throats but avoid those with povidone-iodine.

For more info go to

www.thewomens.org.au/images/uploads/fact-sheets/Medicines-in-breastfeeding

Hayfever and allergies

Some tablets called antihistamines for hayfever and allergies can make you sleepy. These are older types like dexchlorpheniramine, promethazine and pheniramine. It's better to not use these if you are feeding at the breast or pumping breastmilk for your baby. They can make your baby sleepy too.

There are newer antihistamines that don't cause you to get tired. Nasal sprays like budesonide and beclomethasone are safe to use. If you have asthma, using your puffer is safe while feeding at the breast or pumping breastmilk for your baby.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Medicines and breastfeeding (continued)

Preventing pregnancy (contraception)

If you want to use a contraceptive pill to stop getting pregnant while breastfeeding, use the mini-pill. The normal pill can lower your milk supply.

The morning after pill is safe for emergency contraception. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Go to www.qld.gov.au/health/condition/womens-health/contraception/emergency-contraception

Medroxyprogesterone depot injection (given intramuscularly every 3 months) is excreted into breastmilk in very low amounts, and is also safe for use. This is given about 6 weeks after birth. Talk to your doctor.

Some implanted or inserted contraceptives are safe to use while breastfeeding. Talk to your doctor to check if this is a good choice for you.

Constipation

To stop constipation (when you can't go to the toilet) try eating more fibre and drinking more water. If you need medicine to help, laxatives with fibre are good. Medicines that make your poo soft are also safe. Be careful with large amounts of senna or bisacodyl as they can cause loose poo in your baby.

Vitamins and herbs

Many vitamins and minerals are safe to take while breastfeeding.

However, some natural medicines can affect your breastmilk production or be harmful to your baby.

A well-balanced diet which includes all food groups is the best way to ensure you receive all the vitamins and minerals.

While breastfeeding or pumping expressed breastmilk for your baby, always check with your pharmacist, doctor or child health nurse before taking any vitamins or herbal drugs. You can also call the free helpline on 1300 633 424 or go to www.1300medicine.com.au/

Alcohol

It's safest not to drink alcohol while breastfeeding.

Alcohol enters your breastmilk and can impact your baby's brain growth.

In 30-60 minutes, your breastmilk has the same blood alcohol level as you do.

If you do drink alcohol wait 2-3 hours before breastfeeding. Limit to no more than two standard drinks a day.

Do not drink alcohol just before you breastfeed. You can express milk in advance if you plan to drink.

Common breastfeeding concerns

Smoking and vaping

Quitting smoking and vaping is best for you and your baby.

Smoking can lower the amount of breastmilk made and harm your baby.

If you can't quit, do not smoke or vape one hour before or during breastfeeding. Make sure no-one smokes or vapes inside your house, in a car with children or near open windows or doors. In Queensland, it is illegal to smoke or vape in a car with a child under 16 years of age present.

Queensland Health's Quitline service has a free program. It aims to help parents, and others who care for children aged 3 and under to quit smoking or vaping. The 'Smoke-free Family' program consists of support calls and a 12-week supply of Nicotine Replacement Products. To join, call Quitline on 13 78 48 and mention 'Smoke-free Family'.

For more info:

www.quithq.initiatives.qld.gov.au

www.healthdirect.gov.au/vaping

Illicit drugs

Illicit drugs include illegal drugs like marijuana, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines and prescription drugs meant for someone else. You should avoid these if you are breastfeeding because they can pass into your breastmilk and impact your baby.

Using these drugs can make both you and your baby dependent on them. If you are using illicit drugs, tell your health care professional so they can help you decide if it is safe to breastfeed.

For more information

ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Services) offers confidential 24/7 support for people in Queensland with alcohol and drug concerns. Call 1800 177 833 or go to

www.adis.health.qld.gov.au

For more details, talk to your pharmacist, doctor or child health nurse. You can call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or the Medicines line 1300 MEDICINE (1300 633 424)

Expressed breastmilk

Expressing and storage of breastmilk

You can get breastmilk out by hand or with a breast pump.

Expressing breastmilk

1. **Wash your hands:** Use soap and warm water. Dry with a clean towel.
2. **Find a private spot:** Sit down, relax and make sure you won't be interrupted.
3. **Get ready:** Have all your clean and sterilised equipment ready.
4. **Massage your breast:** Gently massage the breast from the top towards the nipple to help milk flow. Do this a few times to so that the whole breast is massaged.

Hand expressing

1. **Position your fingers:** Place your thumb and fingers on opposite sides of your breast just behind the darker area around your nipple.
2. **Squeeze gently:** Squeeze your breast with a rolling motion. Do this about twice per second. Be gentle especially if your breast is full.
3. **Collect the milk:** Drops of milk form on your nipple. When the milk stops flowing, move your fingers around to get milk from all parts of the breast.
4. Change hands or breasts when you get tired.

Using a pump

- **Follow instructions:** Use the directions that come with the pump.
- **Ask for help:** If needed, ask someone to show you how it works.
- **Pumps faster:** It usually takes about 10 minutes per breast. It is faster than hand expressing.
- **Massage while expressing:** Massage your breast towards the nipple to help the milk flow. A warm washer can also help.

Storing expressed breastmilk

1. **Use a clean container:** Pour the milk into a clean, closed container or a special breastmilk storage bag.
2. **Label it:** Write the date and time on the container before putting it in the fridge or freezer.

Storage times

- **Fridge:** up to 3 days (at 4 °C or lower).
- **Without refrigeration:** You can keep breastmilk at room temperature (less than 26 °C) for 6–8 hours.
- **In the freezer:** You can store breastmilk in the freezer section of a fridge with a separate freezer door (at -18 °C) for up to 3 months.
- **Deep freeze:** Frozen in the deep freeze (at -20 °C or lower) for 6–12 months.

Expressed breast milk

Storing breastmilk tips

In the fridge: Always keep breastmilk in the back of the fridge, not in the door.

Freezing: Freeze milk that won't be used in 2 days. If your freezer is inside your fridge, only store the breastmilk for 2 weeks.

Warming breastmilk

1. **Warm the milk:** Put the bottle or container of breastmilk in warm water for a few minutes (no more than 10 minutes).
2. **Check the temperature:** Before feeding, let a drop of milk fall on the inside of your wrist. It should feel warm or even a little cool.
3. **No microwaves:** Never microwave breastmilk.
4. **Discard leftovers:** Throw away any warmed milk that hasn't been used.

Transporting breastmilk

- **Use an insulated container:** Use an esky with a freezer brick.
- **Frozen milk:** If the milk stays frozen, put it in the freezer when you arrive.
- **Thawed milk:** If some milk has thawed, put it in the fridge and use it in 4 hours. Do not refreeze.
- **Fresh milk:** If the milk has never been frozen, you can store it in the fridge or freeze it.

Using frozen breastmilk

- **Oldest first:** Use the oldest frozen milk first.
- **No refreezing:** Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.
- **Thawing:** Thaw frozen milk in the fridge and use it in 24 hours. You can also thaw it in lukewarm water and use it right away.
- **Warm once:** Only warm refrigerated milk once and throw away any that is left over.
- **No microwaves:** Never microwave breastmilk.

Expressed breastmilk

Expressing and storage of breastmilk (continued)

Cleaning equipment

- **No need to sterilise:** Storage containers, expressing equipment and feeding devices do not need to be sterilised if used for human milk, at home and for a healthy infant.
- **Cleaning:** Clean feeding devices with soap and water and air dry them before and after every use. They do not need to be sterilised for a healthy baby.

Rinse well: Rinse the equipment well between uses and store in a clean, closed container. If you don't rinse it, you can store it in the fridge in a clean closed container.

Clean all expressing equipment every 24 hours:

1. **Take apart:** Take apart all containers and the breast pump so you can clean every part.
2. **Rinse in cold water:** Rinse in cold water to remove milk from all the parts.
3. **Wash with soap:** Use a small amount of dishwashing liquid and hot water to remove grease, milk and dirt. Use a brush just for this purpose.
4. **Rinse again:** Rinse at least twice in hot water.
5. **Dry:** Drain bottles and containers upside-down on clean paper towel or a clean cloth towel. Cover them while they air dry. Make sure no water droplets remain before putting them away. If any water remains, dry with paper towel.
6. **Store:** Store the dry kit in a clean, covered container until next use.
7. **Use drinking water:** In areas with different water supplies for drinking and washing, use drinking water to wash and rinse the pump equipment.

Special Cases: If there are breast infections, unwell infants or if you are in a hospital you may need to clean more carefully. For more info visit

www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/expressing-basics

Formula feeding

Formula feeding

- **When breastfeeding isn't possible:** If you can't breastfeed, use a commercial infant formula. Cows milk-based formula is best for most babies. Only use soy or goats milk formula if a doctor says to. Never give regular cows or goats milk to babies under 12 months.
- **Choosing formula in Australia:** There are many good infant formulas available. It's better to choose one with a lower protein level. You don't need to switch to 'follow-on formula' for babies 6–12 months old. Keep using infant formula until your baby is 12 months old. After that, you can start giving pasteurised full cream milk.
- **Bonding during feeding:** Hold your baby close while feeding. This helps you bond with your baby as they can feel, smell and see you.

Getting started

1. **Read instructions:** Check the instructions on the formula container and always use the scoop that comes with it.
2. **Follow directions:** Always follow the instructions on the tin unless your doctor says otherwise. Formula that's too strong can hurt your baby's kidneys, too weak and your baby may not grow well.

Steps to prepare formula:

1. **Clean surfaces:** Where formula will be made with a clean cloth.
2. **Wash hands:** Wash your hands with soap and water, then dry them well.
3. **Clean equipment:** Clean and sterilise the bottle, teat, and any other feeding equipment.
4. **Boil water:** Boil fresh tap water and let it cool until it's lukewarm. This takes about 30 minutes.
5. **Pour water:** Pour the right amount of cooled, boiled water into the sterilised bottle.
6. **Add formula:** Add the right number of scoops of formula to the water. Tap the scoop lightly to remove air bubbles, then level off each scoop with a sterilised knife. Keep the scoop in the can when not in use. Don't wash the scoop as it can introduce moisture into the tin.
7. **Mix:** Put the teat and cap on the bottle and shake it until the powder dissolves.
8. **Check temperature:** Before feeding, let a drop of milk fall on the side of your wrist. It should feel just warm, but cool is better than too hot.
9. **Throw away any formula:** Throw away any milk your baby has not finished in 1 hour. Don't reheat bottles that are half empty. Bacteria can grow and make your baby sick if you give them leftover milk.
10. **Hold your baby close:** Talk to them while feeding. It's crucial to have parent-baby contact. Look at your baby and enjoy the moment. Don't leave your baby alone to drink the bottle. Don't let your baby fall asleep while drinking from a bottle. This can cause choking, tooth decay, ear infections, and hearing loss.

Formula feeding

Formula feeding (continued)

Teats

Teats come in different shapes and materials. There's no proof that any specific teat helps with colic (when babies are fussy). You might need to try a few types to find the right one. Always clean teats well with a bottle or teat brush and sterilise them properly. Check and replace regularly.

Preparing feeds in advance

- It's best to make one bottle of formula at a time, just before feeding.
- If you need to make formula ahead of time, keep it in the fridge (at 5 °C or below) and use it in 24 hours.
- You can also prepare bottles of boiled water. Keep them in the fridge and warm them up in a container of warm water before adding the formula.

Warming formula

- It's safe to give cool formula to babies but most babies like it warm.
- To warm refrigerated formula, put the bottle in a container of warm water before feeding.
- **Don't use a microwave** to heat formula because it can heat unevenly and burn the baby's mouth.
- Only warm the formula just before feeding.
- Throw away any leftover formula after feeding. If formula has been at room temperature for more than 1 hour, throw it away.

Transporting formula

- The safest way to carry formula is to keep the powder and the cooled boiled water in separate clean containers. Mix them when needed.
- You can also make the formula and keep it in the fridge (below 5 °C) until it's cold before transporting.
- Don't take the formula out of the fridge until you're ready to go.
- Carry the formula in an insulated bag with ice bricks and use it in 2 hours. If you arrive in 2 hours, put the formula in the fridge and use it in 24 hours.

Cleaning feeding equipment

- Sterilise feeding equipment (bottles and teats) until the baby is at least 12 months old.
- Clean bottles and teats by hand or in a dishwasher.
- Sterilise using boiling, steaming or cold sterilisation methods. Follow the instructions for commercial steamers.
- Keep some chemical sterilisers liquid or tablets for emergencies.

Formula feeding

Boiling method

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Wash teats and bottles in hot, soapy water using a bottle brush and rinse well.
3. Put the equipment (bottles, teats and caps) in a large saucepan on the back burner of the stove.
4. Cover the utensils with water, making sure there are no air bubbles in the bottle.
5. Bring the water to a boil and let it boil for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat – don't let it boil dry.
6. Let the equipment cool in the saucepan until it's warm enough to touch and then remove it – be careful if children are present.
7. Store dry sterilised equipment in a clean covered container if not used right away.
8. Refrigerate sterilised equipment for up to 24 hours.

Cold sterilisation

1. Wash bottles and teats with cold, soapy water. Rinse with cold water.
2. Make the sterilisation solution by following the instructions on the package carefully.
3. Use plastic or glass equipment only. Metal can rust in the solution.
4. Submerge everything completely in the solution making sure there are no air bubbles. Leave it in for the recommended time.
5. Use tongs to remove items from solution. Shake off excess liquid and use the bottle and teat instantly without rinsing.
6. Discard the solution after 24 hours. Scrub the container and equipment with warm water and detergent, then make up a new solution.
7. Keep the sterilising solution and concentrate out of reach of children.

Formula feeding

Formula feeding (continued)

How much formula?

The following can be used as a general guide:

- 1 to 4 days old: Start with 30-60ml per kg of body weight per day and increase over the next few days.
- 5 days to 3 months old: 150ml per kg of bodyweight per day.
- 3 to 6 months old: 120ml per kg of bodyweight per day.
- 6 to 12 months old: 100ml per kg of bodyweight per day.

Babies should be fed based on their hunger cues (signs). If you are worried about how much your baby is drinking, check the 'How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?' section on page 47-48.

Babies need different amounts of formula. The numbers on the formula packages are just a guide.

Look for signs that your baby is getting enough - six or more wet nappies a day, steady weight gain and being active and happy.

How to feed

1. **Get comfortable:** Sit in a comfy spot and hold your baby close, slightly upright.
2. **Offer the bottle:** Gently touch the teat to your baby's lips. Let them take it into their mouth when ready.
3. **Position the bottle:** Keep the bottle almost horizontal, with enough milk to fill the teat. This helps the milk flow slowly and reduces air swallowing.
4. **Check the flow:** When the bottle is upside down, milk should drip steadily. If it's too slow, loosen the bottle ring a bit. Sometimes powdered formula can clog the teat.
5. **Burping:** Babies swallow some air while feeding. Hold your baby upright and gently rub their back until they burp. If they're feeding happily, don't stop until they're done. Look for signs they've had enough, like turning their head away or closing their mouth. Check teats often.
6. **Avoid feeding lying down:** Don't feed your baby while they're lying down or let them sleep with the bottle in their mouth. This can cause tooth decay (see page 33) or increase their chances of getting an ear infection.
7. **Bonding time:** Enjoy this time with your baby. Look at them, watch them and delight in their presence.

For more info go to

Grow and Go Toolbox – helping feed under fives

www.growandgotoolbox.com

www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/giving-the-bottle

or scan QR code



Introducing solid foods

When and why to start food

When your baby is about 6 months old, you can start giving them different healthy foods along with breastmilk or infant formula. These first foods are called “solids”. Here are some signs that your baby is ready for solids:

- Your baby can hold their head steady and can sit with support.
- Your baby opens their mouth when you bring a spoon near.
- Your baby reaches for food and gets excited when they see others eating.

If your child isn't showing these signs at 6 months talk to your doctor or child health nurse.

Why start solids at 6 months?

At 6 months, your baby needs more iron and energy, which they can get from solid foods.

Starting solids too early may make your baby sick because their tummy isn't ready. Waiting too long can cause problems like not getting enough nutrients, food allergies or being picky about food. Keep breastfeeding or bottle feeding while you introduce solids. Breastfeeding while giving new foods might help prevent food allergies.

What foods to start with?

Experts say to give your baby a variety of foods, including those that can cause allergies like:

- Eggs
- Wheat
- Dairy (like cow's milk)
- Nut paste
- Fish
- Soy
- Sesame
- Seafood

This might help reduce the chance of food allergies. See section on Introducing allergenic foods.

Making it positive

Feeding your baby solids is a great time to bond. Try to make it fun and positive for both of you.

Introducing solid foods

Food allergies

What to do if your baby has a reaction

If your baby shows signs of an allergy, stop giving that food and talk to your doctor. For serious reactions, call 000 and ask for an ambulance right away. For more info on allergy causing foods visit www.allergy.org.au

Breastfeeding (Good for Baby, Good for Mum)

www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/patients

Grow and Go Toolbox – helping feed under fives

www.growandgotoolbox.com

New foods

- Most babies won't have problems with new foods.
- Children with a family history of allergy are at higher risk, but even those without a family history can develop allergies.
- Most children outgrow allergies by their teenage years.
- You should seek advice from a GP or child health nurse if you are worried.

What is an allergy?

An allergy is when your body reacts badly to something that is usually harmless. Your body makes special proteins called antibodies and these cause the allergic reaction.

Starting solids too early (less than 4 months) or too late (after 7 months) can increase the risk of allergies.

Introducing allergenic foods

- Give all babies allergenic foods like peanut butter, cooked egg, cows milk, fish, soy, wheat in their first year.
- This includes babies at high risk of allergies.
- Start with a small amount (¼ teaspoon) of new food.
- Give new foods early in the day to watch for reactions.
- Wait 24 hours before trying another food.
- If no reaction, keep giving that food twice a week.
- If you have concerns, talk to your doctor or child health nurse.

For more info, visit www.preventallergies.org.au

Symptoms of allergies

- Skin rash and swelling
- Stomach pain and diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Eczema

Serious symptoms

- **Trouble breathing or swelling of the tongue***
- **Becoming pale and floppy***

***If these happen call 000 for an ambulance right away.**

Introducing solid foods

When reactions happen

Reactions can happen right away (in seconds and up to 2 hours after eating) or later (hours or days after eating).

Food intolerance and food aversion

- **Food intolerance:** A bad reaction to food that doesn't involve antibodies.
- **Food aversion:** Avoiding certain foods because of personal sensitivities.

Other causes of allergies

- Allergies can be caused by things other than food.
- It's hard to find problem foods when other things might be causing the reactions.
- Allergies and intolerances are more common in young children because their immune systems are still developing. Most kids outgrow these reactions.

Managing food allergies

- If food is the problem, a decision needs to be made about your child's diet.
- Changing a child's diet can be hard for the whole family. Other treatments may be better.
- You should get advice from a doctor or dietician before changing your child's diet.

Feeding from around 6 months

How to start

- Pick a time when your baby is happy, you are calm and you have time to focus on your baby.
- Make sure your baby is in a safe and stable position before feeding. www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/resources/our-work/ellen-barron-family-centre/becoming-independent
- Babies learn by watching us. Let them sit with you, to watch and learn while you eat.
- Solid foods should be given along with breastfeeding or bottle feeding, not instead of it. Keep breastfeeding, giving breastmilk or formula feeding as you did before starting solids.
- Offer 1–2 teaspoons of solid food after a breast or formula feed. Slowly increase this to around 2 tablespoons.

What foods to start with

- Baby cereal with iron added and iron rich foods like pureed meat or tofu. Then add other foods from the five food groups.
- Make the food smooth and mushy by adding breastmilk or formula. You might need to puree it with a blender or push it through a sieve.
- Don't add sugar, honey or salt. Babies have sensitive taste buds and added salt can be bad for their kidneys. Sugar can cause tooth decay. Honey is unsafe before your baby is 12 months old. It can cause a serious illness called botulism.

Introducing solid foods

Feeding from around 6 months (continued)

Feeding tips

- Start with offering solid foods once a day and gradually build up to 3 times a day.
- Your baby might refuse some new foods. This is normal and it might take more than 10 times before they like some foods. Keep offering it at different times.
- Watch for signs that your baby is full, like turning their head away or refusing to open their mouth. Never force your baby to eat or finish all the food.
- Don't put the spoon or food in your mouth before giving it to your baby. This can transfer bacteria and cause tooth decay.
- Cow's milk should not be given as a drink until 12 months, but it can be added to food.

Breastmilk and formula feeds

- Keep breastfeeding or bottle feeding based on your baby's cues and body language. Breastmilk or formula is still your baby's main food at this age.

www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/five-food-groups

Grow and Go Toolbox – helping feed under fives

www.growandgotoolbox.com

Tips for feeding your baby

- **Clean your baby's teeth:** Start cleaning your baby's teeth as soon as they appear. Use a small, soft toothbrush with water. At 18 months, use a small amount of low fluoride toothpaste.
- **Store and prepare food safely:** Make sure the food you give your baby is stored and prepared in a clean place. Babies can get food poisoning easily. Keep prepared food in your fridge for 1–2 days. Don't reheat food more than once and throw away any food your baby doesn't eat.
- **Expect changes in nappies:** Your baby's nappies will change as they try new foods.
- **Introduce water:** Start giving your baby cooled boiled water from a cup with a spout. Don't give soft drinks, cordials or tea. Fruit juice isn't needed.
- **Prepare food ahead:** Make food ahead of time and freeze in ice cube trays or small containers.

Feeding your baby is an exciting time! It is not just about nutrition but also about helping your baby to try new flavours and enjoying eating together.

Introducing solid foods

Check your baby's growth

- Regularly check your baby's growth and record it in their PHR. Make sure their growth follows the pattern on the chart. If the growth line is flat, or going down, or going up too fast, talk to a health professional.

Meal ideas for 6–7 months

Breakfast:

Breastmilk or formula.

Baby cereal with iron, mixed with breastmilk or formula and/or pureed fruit like apples, pears, berries or mashed banana.

Mid-morning:

Breastmilk or formula

Lunch:

Breastmilk or formula.

Pureed meat, fish, well cooked egg, tofu or legumes. Pureed vegetables like pumpkin, sweet potato, carrots, potato, peas, broccoli. Gradually make the texture lumpier.

Mid- afternoon:

Breastmilk or formula

Dinner:

Breastmilk or formula.

Pureed meat, well cooked egg, tofu or legumes. Pureed vegetables. Pureed pasta or rice.

Feeding from 7 to 12 months

By now your baby is eating pureed meats, well cooked egg, pureed tofu or legumes, baby rice cereal, pureed fruit and pureed vegetables, and breastmilk or formula.

Breastmilk and formula feeds

- Keep breastfeeding or bottle feeding based on your baby's cues and body language.
- Only put expressed breastmilk, formula or water in your baby's bottle. Babies can also use a feeding cup from around 6 months.
- It's recommended to keep breastfeeding until at least 12 months and beyond. If your baby is formula fed, 11 to 12 months is a good time to switch from bottles. Use a cup but keep using infant formula until 12 months. Breastmilk and formula are sources of nutrition until 12 months of age.

Foods to add in

- Once your baby can eat smooth food, start giving them different textures like fine mash, lumpy mash and minced food. This helps their jaw and speech develop and can reduce feeding problems later.
- Offer food three times a day at regular meal times.

Introducing solid foods

Feeding from 7 to 12 months *(continued)*

- As your baby eats more, give solid foods before breast or formula feeds. Once your baby is eating a variety of meat, vegetables, fruit and grains start adding these foods in any order:
 - hard-boiled egg (well cooked)
 - smooth nut butter/paste
 - cooked boneless fish
 - tofu
 - yoghurt
- By 8 months, offer finger foods like rusks, toast, soft cooked vegetables and soft fruits to encourages self-feeding.
- Accept the mess! This is a time for your baby to explore food by touching and self-feeding.
- Introducing a variety of foods now will make it less likely for your baby to refuse new foods or have feeding problems later.
- Keep trying foods from the Five Food Groups **www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/five-food-groups**
- Don't add sugar or salt to your baby's food.
- For fish, cook fresh boneless fish well and check for bones by feeling with your fingers. If using canned fish, use unsalted water-packed fish.
- Avoid high sugar, fat or salty foods like lollies, sweet drinks, chips and savoury biscuits. These don't help your baby grow well and can make them less likely to accept healthy foods.
- Offer cooled boiled water, expressed breastmilk or formula from a cup.
- **Cow's milk:** Don't give cow's milk as a drink until 12 months old but you can add it to their food.
- **Choking hazards:** Avoid foods that can cause choking like whole nuts, seeds, raw carrot, whole grapes, celery sticks and chunks of apple until your child is 3 years old. Smooth nut pastes and spreads are okay from around 6 months.

Tips for feeding your baby

- **Fresh food:** Serve freshly prepared food or food that has been in the fridge for no more than 1 to 2 days.
- **Family meals:** Let your baby sit with the family at meal times to watch and learn. Give them a spoon to hold, even if you are feeding them.
- **Food amounts:** The amount of food your baby needs will vary. Offer healthy foods and let your baby decide how much to eat. It's okay if they don't finish everything on their plate. Use their growth and happiness as a guide.
- **Baby food pouches:** These are convenient for travel but shouldn't be the main source of nutrition. They don't have enough variety in textures, flavours, and nutrients. Spoon the food out for your baby instead of letting them suck it from the pouch to teach proper feeding skills.

Introducing solid foods

Sample menu quantities

The amounts in the sample menu are just a guide. Babies eat different amounts based on their growth and activity levels. Your baby's appetite might change during growth spurts and teething. Watch for signs that your baby is full and never force them to eat. It's okay to have leftover food on their plate.

Check your baby's growth

Regularly check your baby's growth and record it in their PHR. Make sure their growth follows the pattern on the chart. If the line is flat, going down or going up too fast, talk to a doctor or child health nurse.

Planning meals

How much food your baby eats can change from day to day. Use the serving sizes as a guide. By 12 months, your baby should be eating a variety of nutritious foods that the rest of the family enjoys.

Grains (cereal) foods

- Bread, rolls, flat bread, cooked rice, pasta, noodles, porridge, polenta, barley, buckwheat, semolina, cornmeal, quinoa, bulgur, crispbreads, English muffin, scones or crumpets.
- Infant cereal (dried), porridge, rice, oats and mixed grain cereals.

Vegetables

- Cooked vegetables are best. Fresh is great, but frozen and canned (with no added salt) are also good.

Fruit

- Fresh fruit is best. Frozen and canned (with no added sugar) are also good.

Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, legumes/ beans

- Cooked meat, chicken, fish, egg, tofu or legumes/beans.

Breastmilk or formula yoghurt/cheese or alternatives

- Yoghurt or cheese, choose full cream varieties.
- From 10 to 12 months, add snacks like fruit, yoghurt, toast and sandwiches.

For more info visit www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Introducing solid foods

Feeding from 7 to 12 months (continued) **Feeding your child from 12 months**

Meal ideas 7 to 12 months

Breakfast

Baby cereal mixed with breastmilk or infant formula or full cream milk and/or
Mashed fruit and/or
Full cream yoghurt

Mid-morning

Breastmilk or infant formula

Lunch

Mashed, minced or finely chopped meat or egg or alternative and
Mashed, minced or finely chopped well cooked vegetables
Bread cut into pieces or cooked pasta or rice and
Breastmilk or infant formula

Mid - afternoon

Breastmilk or infant formula

Dinner

Mashed, minced or finely chopped meat or egg or alternative and
Mashed, minced or finely chopped well cooked vegetables
Bread cut into pieces or cooked pasta or rice and
Breastmilk or infant formula

Your child can now enjoy many of the same foods as the rest of the family.

Foods to add

- Full cream cows milk
- Regular tap water (unboiled)
- Replace infant formula with full cream cows milk. Limit it to about 500 ml a day to leave enough room for solid foods.

Preparing food

- **Offer family meals:** Children don't need special foods. Modify the texture if needed by cutting up meats or use small pasta pieces.
- **Introduce a variety of foods:** It might take more than 10 tries for your child to accept new foods.

Do not use food as a bribe or treat.

Introducing solid foods

Mealtime tips

- Make mealtimes pleasant and encourage your child to feed themselves.
- Don't force your child to finish all their food.
- Continue breastfeeding to help protect against infections.
- Give solids before fluids.
- Plan regular meal and snack times and allow enough time for your child to eat.
- Do not add sugar and salt to foods.
- Be patient and consistent.

If you have special dietary needs or limited food choices, seek advice from a dietitian, child health nurse or your GP.

Breastmilk and formula

- **Breastfeed:** Breastfeed as often as your child wants and as long as you can.
- **Formula:** Formula or follow-on formula is not needed after 12 months.
- **Solid foods:** Solid foods should become a bigger part of your child's diet after 12 months.
- **Water and full cream cow's milk:** Serve water and full cream milk in a cup.

Avoid sugary drinks

- **Sugary drinks:** Drinking sugary drinks can cause tooth decay.
- **Fruit juice:** Fruit juice is acidic and can harm teeth. Avoid giving these drinks in baby bottles.

Planning meals from 12 months

Nutritional needs

- **Variety:** Offer foods from the Five Food Groups.
- Growth and activity levels can change how much your child needs to eat.

For more info see www.eatforhealth.gov.au.

Food groups

- **Grains:** Bread, rice, pasta, porridge and other whole grains.
- **Vegetables and legumes:** Cooked or raw vegetables, beans and leafy greens. Fresh is best but frozen and canned are good too.
- **Fruit:** Fresh fruit is best. Frozen and canned (without added sugar) are also good. Limit fruit juice and dried fruit because of high sugar content.
- **Dairy:** Milk, yoghurt, cheese and ricotta cheese are great options. Soy, rice or other cereal drinks with at least 100 mg of calcium per 100 ml. Full cream varieties are best for children under 2 years old.

Introducing solid foods

Feeding your child from 12 months (continued)

- **Protein foods:** Cooked meat, chicken, fish, eggs or cooked or canned legumes or beans. Tofu or nut or seed paste (peanut or almond butter or tahini).

Tips:

- Red meat is an excellent source of iron. Include it often.
- Nuts can be a choking hazard for young children. Use only smooth nut pastes.
- Encourage your child to try different foods and make mealtimes enjoyable. If you have special dietary needs, talk to a dietician or doctor.

Meal ideas for 12-month-olds

Here's a sample menu to show how your child can enjoy a variety of foods over the day.

Breakfast

Breastfeed
Cereal with milk
Fruit

Mid-morning

Toast or crackers with spread
Water

Lunch

Meat, chicken, fish, eggs, legumes and
A range of orange and green vegetables (cooked and raw)
and
Bread or pasta, rice or noodles

Example: chicken or egg sandwich with cucumber sticks and cherry tomatoes.

Mid-afternoon

Yoghurt and Water

Dinner

Meat, chicken, fish, eggs, legumes and
A range of orange or green vegetables (cooked and raw)
and
Pasta, rice or noodles

Before bed

Breastfeed or milk
Water is the best drink avoid fruit juice.

Introducing solid foods

Food Suggestions

Toddlers often enjoy these foods:

- shepherd's pie
- macaroni cheese
- minced meat and pasta shells
- fish or chicken fingers
- ravioli
- risottos and pastas with vegetables
- diced meats
- cheese
- food cut into different shapes, like melon balls, sandwich shapes
- pikelets
- small fruit and vegetables, like cherry tomatoes, grapes
- noodles and different pasta shapes
- boiled or scrambled egg
- potato patties
- home-made pizza fingers
- mini chicken drumsticks
- meatballs
- baked beans
- mini muffins
- beef patties
- diced fresh fruit

- vegetable soups with pasta and cheese they sprinkle on themselves
- foods where they are involved in the preparation.

Tips for serving vegetables

- Present vegetables separately, so they can be identified.
- Sometimes raw vegetables are accepted better than cooked.
- Varying the way you serve vegetables for example, mashed potato vs boiled potato.
- Grated carrot in a sauce might be eaten when carrot pieces are not.

Remember

- Food can be simple and doesn't need to be complex.
- Adapt family food to suit your child's development.
- If using store bought prepared food, start with single ingredients like pumpkin or sweet potato. Use these foods occasionally as they don't offer enough variety in textures and tastes.

Encourage your child to try new foods and make mealtimes fun.

Introducing solid foods

Recipes for babies

It's good to make different foods for your baby. Foods have a stronger taste to babies than adults. It's good for them to taste natural foods without adding salt, sugar or honey. Honey is unsafe before your baby is 12 months old.

By the time your baby is 12 months old they can be eating the same healthy meals as the rest of the family. You can change the texture to match your baby's needs.

For example, if the family is having meat and vegetables, you can make pureed vegetables for your baby. You can finely chop and puree meat mixed with meat juices. Children like to watch and copy people around them. That's why it is good to make healthy choices.

You can use expressed breastmilk, infant formula or cow's milk in baby recipes.

You can also freeze baby food for easy meals later.

For recipe ideas scan the QR code or go to



Homemade baby food ideas:

in pictures | Raising Children Network

www.raisingchildren.net.au/babies/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding-solids/solids-drinks/homemade-baby-food



Toddlers nutrition & fitness | Raising Children Network

www.raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness



Grow & Go Toolbox (growandgotoolbox.com)

www.growandgotoolbox.com

Solids guide

From around 6 months

| | Around 6 months | 6 – 12 months | 12+ months |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Food | High iron foods like baby rice cereal, pureed meat, pureed beans, pureed lentils and other legumes. Mix these with expressed breastmilk, formula or boiled tap water. | A variety of healthy foods but avoid choking hazards like nuts, whole grapes, apple, popcorn and lollies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soft or cooked vegetables• Soft or cooked fruit• Cereals, rice, pasta, breads• Beef, lamb, veal, pork, chicken, fish, legumes (like lentils)• Full cream yoghurt, custard, cheese and milk (milk only in food preparation not as a drink) | Continue with a variety of healthy foods still avoiding choking hazards like nuts, whole grapes, apple, popcorn, lollies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soft or cooked vegetables• Soft or cooked fruit• Cereals, rice, pasta, breads• Beef, lamb, veal, pork, chicken, fish, legumes (like lentils)• Full cream milk, yoghurt, custard and cheese |
| Flavourings | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No added salt or sugar• No honey | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No added salt or sugar• No honey | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No added salt or sugar• Honey is not needed |
| Texture | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start with smooth pureed foods. Begin with thin textures and gradually make them thicker | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move on to mashed foods, then minced and chopped foods, by 8 months most babies should be able to handle 'finger foods' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move on to chopped 'family' foods |
| Drinks | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breastmilk or formula• Cooled boiled tap water from a cup• Fruit juice is not needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breastmilk or formula• Cooled boiled tap water from a cup• Fruit juice is not needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cows milk or breastmilk• Juice and formula not needed• Regular (unboiled) tap water from a cup |

Physical activity

Activity for babies

- Physical activity helps children be healthier, happier, smarter and stronger. Make time to play and have fun with your baby.
- Interactive play in safe places helps babies learn from birth. All babies and kids need a mix of activity, rest and sleep every day. Kids love moving and exploring and they learn best from unstructured, active play. For more info visit:

www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-infants-toddlers-and-preschoolers-birth-to-5-years

In the first six months, babies learn to:

- reach for and grasp objects.
- turn their head toward sounds, movement or touch.
- move their arms and legs while lying on their stomach (tummy-time).

In the second six months, babies learn to:

- crawl.
- pull up to stand.
- creep while using an object for support.
- walk.

Tips

- Help your baby be active several times a day with supervised floor play, including crawling. More is better.
- For babies not yet mobile, ensure at least 30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day while awake.
- Don't restrain your baby for more than 1 hour at a time (like in a stroller, car seat or highchair).
- Help your baby get comfortable with the world around them. Introduce them to the outdoor sounds, sights and feels. Always remember sun safety.
- Sleep is vital. Babies 0–3 months should get 14–17 hours of sleep per day including naps. Babies 4–11 months should get 12–16 hours.

Physical Activity

Screen-time

Kids learn good habits by playing, being active, resting and sleeping when needed. They also benefit from reading, singing, doing puzzles and storytelling with caregivers.

No screen time is recommended for children under two years old except for video chatting. This includes TVs, mobile phones, iPads and tablets. Children learn best by interacting with people around them. Through play and social interactions, young children develop movement and communication skills.

For more info visit:

www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/24-hour-movement-guidelines-birth-to-5-years-brochure

www.raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/media-technology/healthy-screen-time-0-2-years

Sun protection

Baby's and young children's skin is sensitive and can easily get sunburned. Infants under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sunlight.

- Plan daily activities to keep your baby protected from the sun. Try to go outside in the early morning or late afternoon.

- Use physical protection like shade, long-sleeved shirts, long shorts and wide brimmed hats. Make sure that hat straps are not a choking hazard. Do not cover the pram or stroller with a blanket as it can cut air flow and increase the temperature.
- Do not expose babies to sunlight to treat nappy rash or jaundice, as it can cause sunburn and skin damage.
- Sunscreen is not recommended for babies under 6 months. This is due to their sensitive skin. After 6 months use a broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher sunscreen designed for children or for sensitive skin. Use on areas not covered by clothing. Apply at least 20 minutes before going outside.
- After 12 months apply sunscreen to exposed skin as part of your child's daily morning routine. Reapply every 2 hours if staying outdoors for longer periods.
- Use sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard for UV protection and are close-fitting, to cover as much of the eye area as possible.

For more info visit

www.sunsmart.com.au/resources/sunsmart-app
download the free SunSmart app.

Acknowledgements

Breastfeeding and infant nutrition

The chapters on infant nutrition are consistent with the Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy: 2019 and Beyond.

Information is drawn from:

- Infant Feeding Guidelines, National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013 www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- Breastfeeding and your baby, Queensland Health www.qld.gov.au/health/children/babies/breastfeeding
- Growing Strong: Feeding You and Your Baby, (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families) www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/patients
- Good Start to Life (for Maori and Pacific Islander children and families) www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/our-work/good-start-program
- Herbal medicines and breastfeeding, The Women's. The Royal Women's Hospital, Victoria www.thewomens.org.au/health-information/breastfeeding/medicines-drugs-and-breastfeeding/complementary-medicines-and-breastfeeding

Thank you

This booklet is the result of input and effort from many health professionals in Queensland. Their assistance with the content of this booklet is greatly appreciated.

When your child is sick

This section draws on information from:

- Fever www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/health-a-to-z/fever
- Sepsis signs and symptoms, Queensland Paediatric Sepsis Program Children's Health Queensland, 2025 www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/health-a-to-z/sepsis/sepsis-signs-and-symptoms
- Fever - Children: When to See the Doctor, Better Health Channel www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- Mild pain: Should my child take pain relief medication? www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/resources/health-a-to-z/mild-pain-should-my-child-take-pain-relief-medication

This information is provided as general information only and should not be relied upon as professional or medical advice. Professional and medical advice should be sought for health concerns or manifestations. Best efforts have been used to develop this information which is considered correct and current in accordance with accepted best practise in Queensland as at the date of production.

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Useful contacts and websites

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Crisis Support

13YARN (13 92 76)

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)

1800 177 833 www.adis.health.qld.gov.au

Australian Breastfeeding Association

1800 mum 2 mum/1800 686 268

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Australian Immunisation Register

1800 653 809

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/australian-immunisation-register

Australian Multiple Birth Association (AMBA)

1300 886 499 www.amba.org.au

Beyond Blue Parenting and mental health

1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/parenting

Children's Health Queensland

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au

Connecting2u (free SMS service)

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/our-work/connecting2u

Breastfeeding information (Queensland Health)

www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding

Child Safety After Hours Service Centre 1800 177 135

DV Connect (domestic violence helpline)

Women: 1800 811 811 (24/7) Men: 1800 600 636

(9 am- midnight) www.dvconnect.org

Ellen Barron Family Centre (parenting support service)

07 3139 6500 / 1300 408 213

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/services/locations/ellen-barron-family-centre

Health Direct

1800 022 222 www.healthdirect.gov.au

IN AN EMERGENCY, ALWAYS CALL 000 AND ASK FOR THE AMBULANCE, POLICE, OR FIRE SERVICE.

Kidsafe Queensland

07 3854 1829 www.kidsafeqld.com.au

Lifeline

13 11 14 or SMS 0477 131 114 www.lifeline.org.au

MensLine Australia

1300 789 978 www.mensline.org.au

PANDA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia)

1300 726 306 (Mon – Sat) www.panda.org.au

Parentline (Phone Counselling Service)

1300 301 300 www.parentline.com.au

Pregnancy, Birth and Baby

www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au

Queensland Government - Immunisation information

www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation

Queensland Poisons Information Centre (24/7 hotline)

13 11 26

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/poisonsinformationcentre

Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health

www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/qcpimh

Quitline

13 78 48 www.quitqh.initiatives.qld.gov.au

Raising Children Network

www.raisingchildren.net.au

Red Nose (Grief and Loss 24/7 Support Line)

1300 308 307 www.rednose.org.au

True (Relationships and Reproductive Health)

www.true.org.au

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

Ask for a Child Health Nurse - available from 6.30 am – 11pm

www.health.qld.gov.au/13health



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