
In this factsheet we call the baby “he”. Other factsheets in this series use “she”. We feel this is simpler than writing “he or she” every time.

Can I breastfeed my older baby?

Yes. Breastmilk and breastfeeding are important to your baby or young child. Breastmilk continues to give him nutrients and protection against infection at any age. The World Health Organization and the Canadian Pediatric Society recommend that children be breastfed for 2 years and beyond.

Babies less than 6 months old need only breastmilk, no other food or drink. When your baby is older than 6 months of age he will need to start having other foods in addition to breastmilk. Some babies are interested in additional food right away. Some take a little longer to enjoy new foods. Breastmilk will still be the most important food for your baby for most of the first year.

What if my baby loses interest in breastfeeding?

Most babies between the age of 5 and 8 months become busy, learning about the world around them. They may seem to lose interest in breastfeeding. **This does not mean they are ready to wean.**

Babies at this age may only feed for a short time. Offer the breast often. Some babies like positions where they are more upright and can look around while eating. Babies may feed better during quiet times around naps or in the night.

Do I have to wean my baby when I go back to work or school?

No. Changes in your life, like going back to work or school will affect your breastfeeding. **This does not mean you have to stop breastfeeding.** You and your baby can still enjoy breastfeeding. You will need to make some changes that suit you and your baby.

Some ways that mothers have continued to breastfeed are:

- having the baby close by and breastfeeding during breaks and meals
- removing milk from their breasts when they are away from their baby and letting the baby's caregiver feed the expressed milk
- breastfeeding the baby while they are at home and the baby has other foods, formula or other liquids while they are at work or school

Can I breastfeed when I am pregnant?

Yes. In a healthy pregnancy, breastfeeding your older baby will not hurt your unborn baby. You may notice your nipples are tender and that you make less milk. The taste of your milk may change and some babies stop breastfeeding. Other babies do not mind and keep on breastfeeding.

If you are pregnant, continue to eat healthy foods and rest whenever you can. It may help to speak with your doctor, midwife or a dietitian to make sure you and your baby are getting enough nutrients.

It is possible that some activities including breastfeeding can cause contractions. If you feel any contractions while you are breastfeeding, stop and call your doctor or midwife.

Can I breastfeed my older baby after the new baby is born?

Yes, you can breastfeed your older baby when your new baby is born. This is called tandem nursing. It is important to meet the needs of your newborn first. Breastfeed your new baby at least 8 times in 24 hours.

Mothers who have breastfed two children at the same time can give you good ideas on how to do this. You can call La Leche League or a lactation consultant for more information and support with tandem nursing.



There are many people who can answer questions or help you with breastfeeding your older baby.

Some choices are:

- ☎ a lactation consultant
- ☎ a public health nurse
- ☎ a La Leche League leader
- ☎ your doctor or midwife