

Warning Signs

Baby's red flags:

- Breastfeeding sessions are really short – less than 10 minutes – or really long – more than 50 minutes.
- Baby seems hungry after feedings.
- Baby may not be getting enough milk if they:
 1. Have fewer than 6 wet diapers a day at one week old
 2. Urine is dark yellow or spotted with red, or stools are dark or hard
 3. Are under their birth weight at two weeks of age
- Baby skips feedings—as a newborn, your baby needs to feed around the clock, including overnight, to sustain their growth. You might even have to wake your baby to feed sometimes! If your baby doesn't seem interested in feeding, call your provider.

Mom's red flags:

- After the first five days of breastfeeding, you don't feel your breasts filling with milk
- Severe pain during feeding
- Extreme engorgement—hard, painful breasts
- Your breasts don't feel softer or less full after a feeding

It helps to keep a record of your baby's feeding sessions and diaper changes during the first few weeks. These records are helpful if you need to talk to your provider about any issues.

Discomfort when feeding

Latching Issues - If you feel pain after the first minute or so of latching, your baby may have an improper latch. Other signs include light, quick sucking, puckered cheeks, and no swallowing sounds. It's okay to break the latch by inserting your finger in baby's mouth and then try, try again!

Sore Nipples - The first few days of breastfeeding can be tough on your nipples. To help, wash with warm water but avoid soap which can irritate broken skin. Allow breastmilk to dry on your nipples after feeding. Use purified lanolin to soothe and heal if needed.

Food Sensitivities or Allergies

A well-balanced diet of healthy foods is best for both mom and baby during breastfeeding. Sometimes though, a baby might have a food sensitivity—a reaction to a food in mother's diet. Reactions last less than 24 hours, babies may cry or fuss after these foods. Common culprits are spicy, greasy, or gassy foods. You can avoid these foods in your diet if you notice a pattern. Less than 3% of babies who are exclusively breastfed may have an allergic reaction, often to cow's milk in mother's diet.

Supply Issues

Oversupply is when your body makes more milk than your baby needs. Some signs of oversupply for your baby:

- Coughing, choking, or gulping

To treat oversupply, you can adjust your feeding pattern to slow down milk production. Try offering only one breast per feeding, but beware of engorgement.

Undersupply Issues

There are some factors that can cause low supply, including:

- Some oral birth control pills or other medications
- Fewer milk ducts – due to surgery or cancer
- Supplementation with formula or bottled milk
- Drinking alcohol or smoking

There are a variety of strategies to increase milk production, so if you are concerned about low supply, talk to your provider for recommendations.

Returning to Work

Returning to work can be a challenging transition for both mom and baby. To prepare, be sure you know about safely pumping, storing, and preparing breastmilk in bottles, and practice all of this at home with your baby! You'll also want to talk to your employer as early as possible about a private area to pump and about flexibility in your schedule. Before returning to work, plan ahead by packing everything you need—the pump and all its parts, snacks, a shawl, etc. – the night before.

References:

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