



# Early Milk Production

Before your baby is born, it will be helpful for you to take a breastfeeding class, talk with a lactation consultant, find a support group, and surround yourself with people who will encourage you in breastfeeding.

## Get a good start

Begin breastfeeding your baby as soon as possible. Feed your baby often. The nurses can help you start breastfeeding. Lactation consultants may also be available.

Before leaving the hospital, make an appointment for breastfeeding support. Some insurance plans cover breastfeeding support, so be sure to ask.

## The first few days:

- **Day of Birth:** Start breastfeeding soon, ideally within the first hour of your baby's birth. Some babies will crawl to the breast and attach on their own. Others need a little help.
- **Day One:** Watch for feeding cues that tell you the baby is ready to nurse: putting his or her hands to the mouth, licking the lips or turning the head. Normal newborns feed more often at night. Try to feed your baby eight or more times every 24 hours.
- **Day Two:** Feed your baby as often as he or she wants. Frequent feedings, called cluster feeds, give you lots of breastfeeding practice and stimulate milk production. If your breasts are sore, ask for help with latching.
- **Day Three:** Your breasts may feel firmer and fuller. This signals the transition from colostrum to mature milk. Feed your baby whenever he or she shows feeding cues. Those cues, not the clock, will tell you when your baby wants to feed again.

## Milk production

Your body starts producing colostrum during pregnancy. Colostrum is a thick, yellowish milk made in small quantities, just right for a baby's small stomach. Colostrum is high in nutrition and meets all of a baby's dietary needs. It also protects babies from disease. Colostrum will change into mature milk several days after you give birth.

By nursing frequently, you can help your milk come in on time. The amount will increase daily and change with your baby.

At the start of a feeding, the baby gets foremilk. It is higher in water and sugar. At the end of a feeding, the baby gets hindmilk. It has more fat for brain development and helps the baby feel full.

Let your baby nurse on one side until the breast feels soft before you offer the other breast. This will give your baby both foremilk and hindmilk.