



# THE CANADIAN COLLEGE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

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## BREASTFEEDING SUGGESTIONS AND BENEFITS

### **Establishing Breastfeeding:**

- Find a comfortable position away from stress to nurse. This allows easy let-down.
- Bring the baby to the breast rather than the other way around. This avoids pulling on the nipple, which creates poor suction and nipple soreness.
- Allow the baby to develop its own patterns; attempts to schedule increases parental anxiety and imposes stress on the baby. Allow time for adjustment to the outer world. A pattern will develop between you and your baby.
- Babies will feed between 8 to 18 times per day. Some learn the skill of suckling more quickly than others. Allow for your baby's uniqueness.

### **Nipple Soreness:**

Temporary soreness usually occurs when beginning breastfeeding. These suggestions may help:

- A quality diet with high Vitamin C intake.
- Apply warm black tea bags to the nipples between feedings using a Band-Aid to keep it in place.
- Apply lanolin cream on the nipples after feeding unless you are allergic to wool.
- Air drying the nipples after feeding is helpful.
- Break the suction by placing a finger on the baby's mouth before removing the baby from the breast. Apply Vitamin E out of a capsule directly to the sore nipple.
- Try different positions for holding the baby, which help him or her to grasp the areola and nipple, not just the nipple.
- Don't wash the breasts with soap. Use only water.

### **Foods:**

#### ***Be Sure To:***

- Have a glass of liquid with every feeding. Eat plenty of high quality and nutritious foods. You are still eating for two.

#### ***Avoid:***

- Coffee and chocolate (frequently cause colic).
- Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and brussel sprouts (may cause colic in some babies). Dairy (may cause congestion or rashes - watch for signs and try removing dairy for a few days.)



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### **BREASTFEEDING SUGGESTIONS AND BENEFITS - CONTINUED**

#### **Clogged Duct:**

- Treat as soon as possible to prevent mastitis. Nurse more frequently.
- Continue nursing on affected breast. Cessation of nursing can increase stasis, increase discomfort, and even endanger milk supply. Nurse frequently but just enough to empty breast.
- Apply warm towels.
- Gently massage breast inward toward nipple to encourage drainage of lymphatic tissue.
- Castor oil pack: Soak washcloth in the oil and apply to the breast. Cover cloth with plastic wrap, then hot towels for 20 minutes. Wash the oil off with baking soda solution.
- Carrot poultice: Grate a raw carrot and apply directly to the breast. This will help draw out infection.
- Drink 2 quarts of water per day.
- Take Vitamin C and Echinacea to support your immune system.

#### **Benefits of Breastfeeding:**

- Nursing contracts your uterus which helps to prevent postpartum bleeding.
- The nutrients in your milk change to the needs of your baby. For example, the nutrient ratio in a woman's milk changes if her baby is premature to accelerate their neurodevelopment. Antibodies are passed in the breast milk, providing a great deal of immunity to your baby during a time when the baby's immune system is developing. This can result in fewer allergies, colds, and ear infections.
- Breastfeeding is particularly protective against some common childhood conditions including eczema, otitis media, and iron-deficiency anemia.
- According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal July (1993), recent studies indicate that one-third to one-half of current infant deaths in North America are because of a failure to breastfeed fully (i.e., to give breast milk exclusively for the first 4 to 6 months of age, then breast milk plus solid food until 12 months).
- Breastfeeding appears to provide substantial protection against breast cancer and osteoporosis. Average annual cost of formula feeding in the first year of life is between \$1,275 and \$3,055. Breastfeeding provides for bonding between mother and child.