



**NATUROPATHIC**  
medicine institute

*Celebrating the healing power of nature*

## **Breast-feeding Suggestions & Benefits**

### **Establishing Breast-feeding:**

- In a relaxed environment find a comfortable position to nurse, either sitting or lying. This allows for easier “let down” (mild flow). If necessary, use pillows to support yourself and your baby. This prevents pulling on the nipple, which creates poor suction and nipple soreness.
- Bring the baby to the breast rather than the other way around, making sure the baby’s mouth is open wide.
- Allow the baby to develop his or her own feeding patterns; attempts to schedule the feedings can increase parental anxiety and impose stress on the baby. However, it is important for the baby to nurse often to keep hydrated. A pattern will develop between you and your baby.
- Babies will feed between 8 to 18 times a day. Some learn the skill of suckling more quickly than others. Allow for your baby’s uniqueness.

### **Nipple Soreness:**

Temporary soreness is common when beginning to breast-feed. These suggestions may help:

- Completely insert the nipple into the baby’s mouth. This is the most important way to prevent soreness. Try holding the baby in different positions to help him or her to grasp the areola and nipple, not just the nipple.
- Break the suction by placing a finger in baby’s mouth before removing the baby from the breast.
- Express breast milk and let it dry on the nipple. Air drying the nipples after feeding may also be helpful.
- Apply warm compresses or black tea bags (steeped & cooled) to the nipple between feedings.
- Don’t wash your breast with soap; use only water. Avoid washing nipples too often.
- Eat a quality diet with adequate nutrient intake.
- Apply vitamin E directly to the sore nipple.

**The Naturopathic Medicine Institute**  
[www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org](http://www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org)

*The information contained in this handout is for educational purposes only and should not be taken as medical advice. Always visit with your primary care practitioner before changing or starting any treatment.*



**NATUROPATHIC**  
medicine institute

*Celebrating the healing power of nature*

- If nipple soreness persists, contact your physician or the La Leche League in your area for help and support.

### **Foods:**

Be sure to:

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

Avoid:

- Coffee and chocolate, they 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 eliminating dairy for a few days.
- Problems from offending foods typically appear 8-12 hours after the food is ingested.

### **Obstructed Duct:**

Obstructed ducts may lead to mastitis, an infection of the breast duct system. This should be treated as soon as possible. The following tips may help a clogged duct.

- Nurse more frequently.
- Continue nursing on the affected breast. Cessation of nursing can increase stasis, increase discomfort, and may decrease milk supply.
- Nurse just enough to empty breast.
- Apply warm (or cold), moist compresses to affected area before nursing.
- Gently massage breast inward toward nipple to encourage drainage of lymphatic tissue.
- Drink 2 quarts of water a day.

**The Naturopathic Medicine Institute**  
[www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org](http://www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org)

*The information contained in this handout is for educational purposes only and should not be taken as medical advice. Always visit with your primary care practitioner before changing or starting any treatment.*



NATUROPATHIC  
medicine institute

*Celebrating the healing power of nature*

**The Naturopathic Medicine Institute**  
[www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org](http://www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org)

*The information contained in this handout is for educational purposes only and should not be taken as medical advice. Always visit with your primary care practitioner before changing or starting any treatment.*



**NATUROPATHIC**  
medicine institute

*Celebrating the healing power of nature*

### **Benefits of Breast-feeding:**

- Nursing stimulates the uterus to contract which helps to prevent postpartum bleeding.
- The nutrients in your milk change according to the needs of your baby. For example, the nutrient ratio in a woman's milk changes if her baby is premature to meet the unique needs of the infant.
- 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.
- Breast-feeding is particularly protective against some common childhood conditions including eczema and otitis media (ear infection).
- Breast-feeding appears to provide protection against breast cancer and osteoporosis.
- Breast-feeding provides for bonding between you and your baby.

### References:

Jolley, S. ARNP, MS, Breast-feeding Triage Tool. King County Department of Public Health. Seattle, WA, 1988.  
Biancuzzo, M. RN, MS, IBCLC, Breast Feeding the Newborn, Clinical Strategies for Nurses. Mosby, Inc. 1999.

**The Naturopathic Medicine Institute**  
[www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org](http://www.naturopathicmedicineinstitute.org)

*The information contained in this handout is for educational purposes only and should not be taken as medical advice. Always visit with your primary care practitioner before changing or starting any treatment.*