

Is my baby getting enough?



If you are worried about not being able to produce enough milk, you are not alone. This is one of the most common breastfeeding concerns for mothers around the world.

The truth is that only a tiny number of mothers physically cannot make enough milk. Feeding in response to baby's very early cues is the best way to ensure you have the full supply that baby needs, and if you are worried, seek support from someone experienced in breastfeeding to help you.

It is important, especially in the early days, to understand that baby is the best teacher and will help your body learn how much milk to make. Remember, baby does not work to the clock. Baby's early feeding cues include rapid eye movement when sleeping (dreaming of her milk!), licking her lips, and starting to turn her head. By the time she is crying, this is a late feeding cue, and getting her latched on is often more stressful for both of you at this point. If you respond to early feeding cues, and allow her to feed as often as she needs, her emptying your breasts will trigger your body to produce exactly what she needs.

Here are some factors to watch for to make sure baby is getting enough milk:

- Babies often lose some weight in their first week of life, but should quickly regain it. A 5-7 percent weight loss during the first 3-4 days after birth is common. Most babies will regain their birth weight by 10-14 days. If your baby is not gaining weight, it's important to get expert breastfeeding advice so that any problem can be resolved quickly, and with the least disruption to both of you!
- You can also gauge your milk supply from baby's nappies. Baby will generally have six or more wet nappies each day. Urine should be light and mild smelling. Pink crystals in your baby's nappy are called urates, and can be normal, but can also be a sign that baby is not getting enough, so consult your healthcare provider.
- Expect 3-4 (or more!) dirty nappies each day by day four. Baby's stools will gradually change from thick black meconium in the first days to yellow and mustardy-looking by around day five. Baby's stool may be seedy and a little chunky or like cottage cheese curds. Sometimes breastfed babies go longer between stools. If you are concerned, consult your healthcare provider.

