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- NHS hospitals and clinics
- GPs
- Social care

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This leaflet has been developed in collaboration with Deborah Robertson, lactation consultant and LLL leader

Medway Community Healthcare CIC providing services on behalf of the NHS
Registered office: MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0PZ
Tel: 01634 382777
Registered in England and Wales, Company number: 07275637



Our privacy notice is available at medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/privacy/

If you would like to view or request a copy of your patient record, please email medch.dataprotection@nhs.net or call 01634 334640. In most instances this service is free and we aim to provide the requested information within 1 calendar month. More information can be found by visiting:

medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/information-about-me/

Medway Community Healthcare provides a wide range of high quality community health services for Medway residents; from community nurses and health visitors to speech and language therapists and out of hours urgent care.

Customer care

Please send any comments about Medway Community Healthcare services to: -

Customer care coordinator
Medway Community Healthcare
MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham,
Kent, ME8 0PZ

t: 0300 123 3444

medwaycustomercare@nhs.net

All contact will be treated confidentially
This information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please email medch.communications@nhs.net

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Making milk to meet your baby's needs

Who to contact

Sue Ward

Infant feeding lead and tongue-tie practitioner

t: 077685 26113

Snapdragon's Centre, Cliffe Road, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3DL

sward9@nhs.net



Helping you and your breastfed baby

When breastfeeding is going well it can be a very special time, helping you feel close to your baby. Sometimes breastfeeding gets off to a slow start, and you and your baby may need extra help from the midwives and health visitors caring for you so that you can breastfeed for as long as you choose.

This leaflet has been written to help you when you are having breastfeeding difficulties. The midwife or health visitor will talk you through the steps described here to help your baby get more of your milk, and also signpost you to other people in the community who have extra skills in supporting breastfeeding families.



1. Skin-to-skin contact

The first few weeks with a new baby are an important time to get to know each other. As you establish breastfeeding try to limit those holding baby to you and your partner, who will also be learning about your baby's needs and can help you and your baby develop a close breastfeeding bond.

To increase your milk production it is a good idea to clear your diary for a few days and spend lots of time in close skin contact with your baby. Take time to relax and enjoy getting to know each other. Strip baby to just a nappy and cuddle against your bare chest. Your warmth and familiar smell will calm your baby and comfort you both.

Close contact can help wake a sleepy baby and encourage feeding instincts. It will also trigger the release of oxytocin and prolactin. These are hormones that help you bond with your baby and are important for making your milk.

Breastfeeding peer supporters are mums who have breastfed their own babies and have been trained to offer mum-to-mum support. You will meet peer supporters during drop-in sessions, groups and 1-2-1's in your local children's centre.

Breastfeeding counsellors have also breastfed their own babies and received more in-depth training than peer supporters. They support breastfeeding mums through local voluntary organisations such as La Leche League (LLL), The National Childbirth Trust (NCT) and the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM).

International board certified lactation consultants (IBCLC) have an international qualification gained over many years. They are experts in breastfeeding and have specialist skills to help with complex breastfeeding problems.

Medway specialist breastfeeding clinic

Led by the health visiting clinical lead for infant feeding and tongue-tie

Children & Family Centre,
Twydall Primary School,
Romany Road (off Twydall Lane),
Gillingham,
ME8 6JH

Every Monday (except bank holidays) between 9am and 12noon

Please call 0300 123 3444
To book an appointment.
Please bring your baby's red book

You can find more information about local breastfeeding support at the website below:
<http://besideyou.abettermedway.co.uk/>

Signs that your hard work is helping your baby get enough breastmilk

After your baby is 5 days old you can expect to see at least 6 heavy wet nappies in every 24 hours, and at least 3 runny yellow poos. These signs are a good way of letting you know that baby is getting enough milk.

It is common for babies to lose a little weight during the first few days. When your milk supply 'comes in' you should expect your baby to start putting on weight, and regain the birth weight by 10 to 14 days old.

At about 6 weeks some breastfed babies poo less often. As long as baby gains weight, feeds actively and appears settled between feeds it is likely that this is normal for these babies.

At the end of each feed your baby will release the breast and will look 'zoned-out'. Between feeds baby will be settled and calm.

Your breast will feel full at the start of a feed and much softer at the end.



Further support

If you have tried all the ideas in this leaflet and your baby is still not breastfeeding actively or gaining as much weight as needed there are other things you can try.

Your midwife or health visitor will help you contact local breastfeeding specialists who will listen to your story and make suggestions to suit you and your baby.

Breastfeeding advocates are children's centre staff who have received extra training to give basic breastfeeding support.

Friends and family members will want to lend a hand so accept their offers to help with older children. Give them tasks around the house so you and your baby can spend more time together.



Using a sling or baby carrier that holds your baby close to your body can help. This way you can be up and about if you have other children to care for. To keep baby safe when using a sling make sure you can always see your baby's face and kiss their forehead.

2. Active breastfeeding

The person giving you this leaflet will also have shown



you how to help your baby attach to the breast and how you can tell that feeding is going well. You will also have been given the yellow leaflet 'off to the best start', which should be used alongside this extra leaflet.

You will know your baby is actively feeding if you can hear or see swallowing (big gulps) as your milk starts to flow. Quick jaw movements (little nibbles) mean very little milk is being swallowed. You should expect a big swallow every 1 to 2 sucks through most of the feed.

Towards the end of the feed this will change as baby naturally slows down. Your breast will also feel much softer.

Sometimes towards the end of a feed your baby will move around and seem a little unsettled. This may mean that baby would like to try the other breast, so always offer the other side.

If you see lots of 'nibbles' during a feed but few or no 'big gulps' you may need to use breast compressions and sometimes super switch feeding to help your baby get more milk.

3. Frequent breastfeeding

In the first 6 months most babies will breastfeed at least 8 times but more often 10 to 12 times in every 24 hours. This will include 1 to 3 times at night. Your baby will let you know it is time for a breastfeed by rooting, licking, finger sucking or eye rolling. If baby is crying you may need to give cuddles to calm your baby before putting to your breast.

Each feed varies in length and may last for between 5 and 40 minutes. If it often takes more or less time than this, or your baby seems unsettled while feeding or between feeds try breast compressions.

4. Breast compressions

If your baby falls asleep soon after starting to breastfeed, or seems to be 'nibbling' rather than taking big gulps you can use breast compressions. This will keep baby interested in feeding as well as increase the amount of calorie rich milk your baby gets. Breast compressions also help drain your breast well and increase the amount of milk you make.

- Do this while baby is latched on but not taking big gulps
- Take a handful of breast and squeeze into your breast with your thumb on one side and fingers on the other
- Squeeze enough to help your milk flow but make sure this does not hurt your breast
- You should notice baby start to take big gulps of your milk
- Hold the squeeze until baby is no longer swallowing
- Release your breast and wait a moment to see if your baby starts sucking and swallowing again

- When baby starts sucking and swallowing again but with 'little nibbles' repeat the breast compression
- When this no longer helps your baby to take big gulps move your hand around the breast to a different position and squeeze again
- This needs to be done at every feed when there are lots of nibbles but few big gulps
- As the amount of milk you make increases you will not need to do this as often



5. Super switch breastfeeding

Super switch feeding should only be used for 12 to 24 hours and will help to increase the amount of milk you make.

It can also help your baby take more of your milk by actively feeding for longer.

- As soon as baby has stopped taking big gulps on the first breast (even with breast compressions) swap to the second breast
- Switching sides will encourage a 'let-down' and your baby will start taking big gulps again
- Use breast compressions until baby stops taking big gulps, then move baby back to the first breast again
- Switching sides can be repeated several times during a feed so that your baby takes lots of your milk
- When you first start doing this you may find you switch breasts after just a few minutes of feeding
- As the amount of milk you make increases your baby will feed actively for longer, taking in more of your milk. As this happens you will not need to switch sides as often