

Ways to Tell that Breastfeeding is Going Well

	Week 1	Weeks 2-6	Weeks 6-12	3-6 Months	7-12 Months
How often?	Every 1-1½ hours round the clock. Wake to feed if longer than 3 hours during day or 5 hours at night. “I’m so tired!” (Sleep when baby sleeps. Have someone bring baby to you to nurse.)	Every 1½ - 3 hours round the clock. 8 - 12 times/day. “I’m so tired!” (Sleep when baby sleeps. Have someone bring baby to you to nurse.)	Every 2 - 3 hours. Longer stretch at night. 8 - 10 times/day. “Wonderful sleep!” Frequent feeds begin to lessen!	Every 2 - 4 hours. May bunch feeds during day. “Good baby!” Things are getting smoother. Begins sleeping through night!	4 - 7 times/day. “I’m so glad I stuck out the first few difficult weeks. Breastfeeding is so easy!”
How long?	5 - 30 minutes per side. Depends on baby. May only nurse on one side.	20 minutes per side. May only nurse on one side.	15 - 20 minutes per side.	Varies with baby. Babies get distracted.	May start “snack nursing.”
Weight Gain	Lose up to 7% body weight. Should start gaining weight near end of week.	Minimum of 5 ounces per week.	1¼ - 2 pounds per month.	1¼ - 2 pounds per month.	¾ - 1 pound per month.
Wet Diapers	1 wet diaper per day of age. (Hard to tell if wet.)	Minimum of 6 per day.	Minimum of 6 per day.	6 or more.	6 or more.
Dirty Diapers	Black tarry stools days 1-2. Changing from brown to yellow day 3 – 5.	Loose, yellow seedy stools. Minimum of 2 – 4 per day. May dirty a diaper at each feed.	Loose, yellow seedy stools. Minimum of 2 – 4 per day. May dirty less diapers by 6 weeks. Some older babies only dirty 1 – 2 per week.	Each baby is different. May only dirty 1 – 2 per week or may dirty diapers each day. Stools will change when you begin solid foods.	Each baby is different. May only dirty 1 – 2 per week or may dirty diapers each day. Stools change depending on amount and type of solid foods.
Breasts/Milk	Small amounts of colostrum first few days. Milk comes in day 3 – 5. Breasts will feel very full.	Mature milk by day 5. Breasts may lose initial fullness about day 10. This is normal adjustment to nursing.	Mature milk. Breasts may continue to go through changes. Feel full before feeding and soft after.	Mature milk. Check for plugged ducts. More likely once baby begins sleeping through night.	Mature milk.
Growth Spurts	7 – 10 days. Baby nurses more often.	3 weeks and 6 weeks. Baby nurses more often.	3 months. Baby nurses more often.	6 months. Baby nurses more often.	