

Physiologic Infant Care

Supporting breastfeeding, sleep, and well-being

Welcoming a new baby can be beautiful and challenging. These are normal newborn behaviors and helpful ways to support your baby — and yourself.

At Night

SUPPORT REST FOR YOU AND BABY



Sleep near your baby.

You and your baby will often sleep more easily when you are close. Consider using a bedside sleeper (sometimes called a sidecar). You can breastfeed while lying on your side.



Avoid getting up at night.

Sitting up and getting out of bed will disrupt your sleep. Keep supplies nearby so you can stay in bed. Skip diaper changes unless needed. Breastfed babies don't usually require burping.



Keep the lights low.

Turning on bright lights can signal daytime. Avoid activities that require bright light or use a dim red light. Keep the environment calm and quiet.



Breastfeed at night rather than pump or use bottles, if you can.

Night-time milk contains melatonin, which may help your baby sleep. Pumping and bottle feeding can disrupt sleep for both of you.



Avoid feeding solids or formula to improve sleep.

Giving solids or formula before 6 months is not recommended and may decrease your milk production. It also does not typically lead to longer sleep for breastfed babies.



Do not sleep train in the first 6 months.

It is not recommended in the first year. A responsive approach to your baby's cues can help everyone get more rest over time.



Bedsharing safety is very important.

Bedsharing is often unplanned. If you choose to feed your baby in bed, reduce risks as much as possible. See the separate handout on Bedsharing and Breastfeeding for details.



In the Daytime

SUPPORT GROWTH, CONNECTION, AND CALM



Wear your baby.

A baby wrap or carrier keeps your baby close and calm. Your hands are free to get things done. Make sure your baby is supported and their face is visible.



Daytime activity may help your baby sleep better at night.

Expose your baby to normal daytime light and noises. Include some supervised tummy time.



Nap when your baby naps, if you can.

Rest helps you feel better and makes it easier to care for your baby.



Focus on your baby's behavior cues.

Your baby will let you know what they need. You do not need to track apps or schedules.



Ask for help.

Other caregivers can change, bathe, and dress your baby. They can also help with cooking, cleaning, and older children so you can rest and recover.



*You're doing an important job.
These early days don't last forever.*

Rest easy, I've got tonight covered.