

# How do I tell if breastfeeding is going well?

## Breastfeeding is going well if ...

## Ask your midwife, child health nurse or GP if ...

Baby has 8 or more feeds a day

Baby has less than 6 feeds a day

Baby feeds for 10 to 40 minutes each time

Baby often or always feeds for 5 minutes or less each time  
Baby often or always feeds for more than 40 minutes each time

Baby has normal skin colour

Baby's skin appears a yellow colour (jaundiced) or is becoming more yellow, especially in the first week\*

Baby is usually active and alert at feed times

Baby often sleepy or falls asleep soon after starting a feed

Baby is usually calm and relaxed when feeding and is content for a while after feeding

Baby is on and off the breast a lot during a feed, or refuses to breastfeed

Baby has lots of wet and dirty nappies (see the chart over the page)

Baby does not have as many wet and dirty nappies (see the chart over the page)

Breastfeeding is comfortable

Breastfeeding is often painful, and the pain does not go away after the baby's first few sucks. Your nipple looks flat or pinched when it comes out of baby's mouth

By 3-4 days old you can hear baby swallowing often during each feed

By 3-4 days of age you do not hear or see baby swallow often during a feed, or you cannot tell if baby is swallowing at all

You think baby needs a dummy

You feel that baby needs to be having formula

\* The yellow colour will often appear around the face and forehead and then spread to the body, arms and legs. When you are changing baby's nappy, test for jaundice by gently pressing baby's skin to see if there is a yellow tinge on the skin.



# NAPPIES

The number of wet and dirty nappies will change during the first week. Watching for these changes can help you to know if feeding is going well.

Baby's age	Wet nappies	Dirty nappies
<b>1-2 days old</b>	1-2 or more per day*	1 or more dark green or black, “tar like” (called “meconium”) nappies per day.
<b>3-4 days old</b>	3 or more per day and nappies feel heavier	At least 2 dirty nappies Colour is changing from a brown/green/yellow colour and becoming looser (called a “transitional stool”)
<b>5-6 days old</b>	5 or more heavy ** per day	At least 2 yellow coloured and may be watery
<b>7 days to 1 month old</b>	6 or more heavy wet nappies per day	At least 2, or more yellow and watery, “seedy” appearance

\* Urates (a pink or orange colour in the nappy) can appear during the first few days, **but not after 4 days of age.**

\*\*Disposable nappies can make it difficult to tell if the nappy is very wet. To get an idea of how heavy a “wet” nappy should be, pour 2-4 tablespoons of water into a clean nappy – you can feel how heavy it is.

## For more information

- Queensland Health booklet “Child Health Information Your guide to the first 12 months”
- Queensland Health Breastfeeding website: [www.qld.gov.au/health/children/babies/breastfeeding](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/children/babies/breastfeeding)
- The Australian Breastfeeding Association’s Helpline 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268)  
or <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

### Charts adapted from:

- UNICEF United Kingdom, Baby Friendly Initiative (2016) Breastfeeding Assessment Tool: Breastfeeding Checklist for Mothers - How can I tell that breastfeeding is going well? <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/>
- Queensland Clinical Guideline: Establishing Breastfeeding (2016) <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/qcg/publications#neonatal>

