

Getting BREASTFEEDING off to a great start

Breastfeeding* is the recommended way to feed your baby and growing child, and is important for the health of you and your baby. While breastfeeding is a normal and natural process, it can take practice, especially in the first several weeks. Learning about breastfeeding before baby arrives will help you accomplish your feeding goals.

During pregnancy

- Learn about the importance of breastfeeding and keys to successful breastfeeding at york.ca/breastfeeding
- Talk to your healthcare provider about your infant feeding goals
- Have your healthcare provider complete a breast assessment and discuss breast changes expected during pregnancy
- Attend a prenatal class to review valuable information about breastfeeding. Visit york.ca/prenatalclasses for more information

After baby arrives

- Cuddle skin-to-skin with your baby as soon as possible after birth and between feedings. Holding baby skin-to-skin can help them use natural instincts to attach to your breast while keeping them calm and warm
- Breastfeed early and often; bring your baby to your breast within the first 30 to 60 minutes after birth
- Let your baby search for your breast themselves while positioned skin-to-skin
- Lean your body back to deepen your baby's latch and make breastfeeding more comfortable and effective

Disclaimer

*The terms breast milk/breastfed/breastfeeding are widely used, but human milk/chestfed/chestfeeding can be used interchangeably.

The terms mother/maternal are meant to be inclusive of all parents, caregivers and significant others.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-800-361-5653

TTY: 1-866-512-6228

york.ca/breastfeeding



After you go home

- Breastfeeding should continue to be comfortable for you and baby
- You will hear baby make the “kaa” sound of swallowing. Swallows will become more frequent each day. By day three or four you will hear swallows every one or two sucks
- Your breasts will feel and look larger and fuller by day three or four. If your breasts are uncomfortably full, apply a cold compress to them between feeds
- Continue to breastfeed at least eight times a day, whenever your baby shows signs of hunger, day or night

Signs of hunger include:

- ✓ Wiggling and turning head from side to side
 - ✓ Sticking out tongue and opening mouth
 - ✓ Crying is a late sign of hunger – try to feed baby before crying begins
- Follow up with your health-care provider to make sure your baby is growing well, usually within 48 hours of going home
 - Your baby will lose weight after birth, but should begin gaining 25 to 35 grams per day after day four. Your baby should return to birth weight by 10 days to two weeks of age

Remember

- Breastfeed any time your baby shows signs of hunger, making sure to feed at least eight times in 24 hours
- Your baby will need to eat day and night. In the first several weeks of life, many babies breastfeed more during the night. This will help establish your milk supply
- You can remove some milk by hand after breastfeeding to support milk production. Speak with your health-care provider about ways you can give this milk back to your baby or store it for later use. Visit york.ca/breastfeeding to learn more about hand expression

If you and your baby are unable to breastfeed after birth, continue to remove milk by hand or with a double electric breast pump at least eight times each day. This will protect your milk supply and provide valuable breastmilk for your baby to drink when they are able.



Wet and dirty diapers

Diapers are the best way to tell if a baby is getting enough milk.

DAY 1	1 wet diaper; 1-2 black or dark green stool  
DAY 2	2 wet diapers; 1-2 black or dark green stools  
DAY 3	3 wet diapers; at least 3 brown, green or yellow stools  
DAY 4	4 heavy* wet diapers; at least 3 brown, green or yellow stools  
DAY 5	5 heavy wet diapers; at least 3 large, soft yellow stools  
DAY 6	6 heavy wet diapers; at least 3 large, soft yellow stools, may be runny and seedy  
*A heavy wet diaper is equal to about 3 tablespoons of water added to a dry diaper	

Talk to your health care provider, a York Region Public Health nurse or a lactation consultant if your baby is not having enough wet and dirty diapers.



When to get help

See your health-care provider and get help with breastfeeding if:

- Your baby is not having enough wet or dirty diapers
- Your baby is very sleepy at the breast or is not waking to eat at least eight times in 24 hours
- Your baby has not regained birth weight within 10 to 14 days after birth
- Your nipples or breast are sore
- Your baby still seems hungry after breastfeeding
- Your baby needs extra breastmilk or infant formula after feeding
- You have questions or want more information about feeding your baby

Where to get help

- York Region Public Health offers free breastfeeding support via telephone, virtual video conferencing sessions or in-person clinics. Call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 (TTY 1-866-252-9933) to speak with a registered nurse or to make an appointment at a local breastfeeding clinic
- Visit york.ca/breastfeeding to access breastfeeding information and resources or to echat with a public health nurse
- Mother-to-mother support is shown to increase breastfeeding rates. La Leche League offers supports in York Region. Visit lllc.ca to learn more
- Free 24-hour telephone support is also available by calling Health Connect Ontario at 811 (TTY 1-866-797-0007). You can also echat about infant feeding with a registered nurse at healthconnectontario.health.gov.on.ca
- Visit ontariobreastfeeds.ca for additional information regarding breastfeeding supports in Ontario communities



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about breastfeeding