



Semi-Reclined aka Biological Nursing or Laid-back

Why Use This Position?

This position improves infant's swallowing, maintains depth of their latch & assists them in managing the flow of milk. Semi-reclined positioning can be helpful for many feeding challenges, especially for babies in the early weeks and months of life. It uses your baby's natural abilities and your own comfort to help feeds be more effective, and it adds a third partner to help you: gravity.

Babies are born with many reflexes that support finding the nipple, suckling, and swallowing, many of which are used in this position. In addition, your baby will be held comfortably on their tummy with secure face contact on your chest. This stabilizes their body and face, which helps them feel safe, enhances their coordination and allows their energy to focus on eating.

Supporting **your body** to be more comfortable will support your baby's body, too. You are a **team** for feeding.

How Do I Do It?

- This can be done skin-to-skin or dressed.
- Get **yourself comfortable** first!
- Place your baby tummy to tummy and so their nose is near the nipple or slightly lower. Many parents find it comfortable to use their hand from the same side as your feeding on to grasp their bum (example left side feed & left arm). This arm acts as a guardrail as they bob around.
- You may hear our team describe this as “baby laying across your body like a seat belt”, but there are no strict rules for your baby in a laid-back position. Your baby can be held across your body, diagonally, or in a more vertical position.
- If you'd like, you are welcome to help your baby with positioning and/or hold chest tissue while they latch (with the opposite hand).
- Allow your baby to wiggle their body as you check - do they look like they are being held in place by gravity? If not, adjust your position and adjust their body so that they are being held to your body using gravity first. You can make little adjustments like shrugging your shoulder(s), but try to avoid holding the back of their head or lift their head.
- This can be done in bed, on the couch, in a chair with a footrest, even in a parked vehicle! Be mindful if you are sleepy, as you will want to be on a *safe sleeping surface*.
- Be patient with yourself - like all skills, this takes practice. You can use pillows, towels, or blankets to keep yourself comfortable and supported. As your baby gets older, and they have gotten used to using their natural feeding skills, both of you will adapt to other positions more easily.

Below your
breasts



Across
your breasts



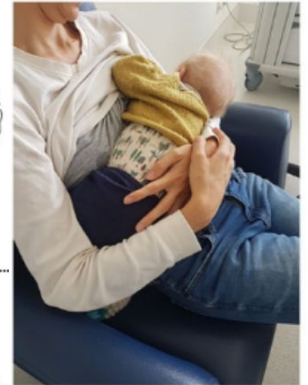
Supported at
your side



Over your
shoulder



Images: Nancy Mohrbacher



Images: Mills et al., 2021