

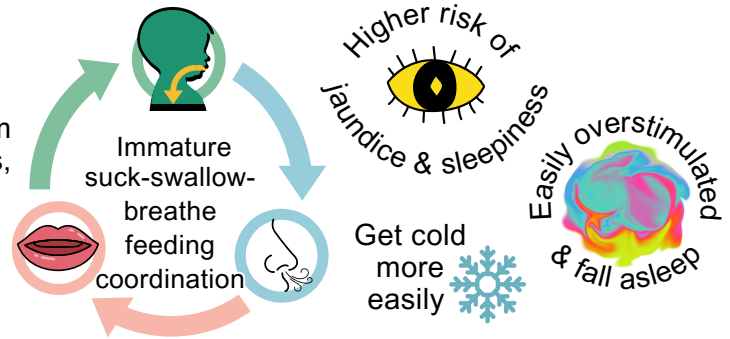


What's So Special?



Being born a little early has unique feeding challenges.

Knowing about these challenges and adapting to them will help your baby grow stronger in their feeding skills, especially with latching to your body.



3 Helpful Practices



(1) Skin-to-Skin

Every day, not just during feeds
Aim for 60 minutes in a row once daily

Baby is in only a diaper
(no mittens or socks, but you can add a hat)
Parent in no shirt or bra

Make sure the room is warm
Add a blanket over both of you if needed

(2) Pay Close Attention Count daily pees & poos.
Monitor jaundice as recommended.

Check their weight once per week in the first month.

(3) Act Quickly

Early adjustments bring long-term success.

Seek out breastfeeding helpers early.

Offer top ups regularly in the early days,
if possible, of your own expressed milk.

Building Your Milk Supply

Your breasts do not know your baby was born early. They need strong messaging in order to increase supply, especially if this is your first time making milk or if you had low supply before.

In the first few days, get hands-on. Try doing 2 minutes of hand expression on each side after feeding or pumping. You can use a spoon to feed your baby any colostrum you express.

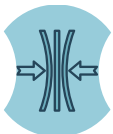
In the first 2-6 weeks, make a plan for this time.

Consider a sustainable way to stimulate your milk supply. You do not have to pump after every chest feed to do that. See the handout "Navigating Low Supply" to learn about ways to avoid exhausting routines like "triple feeding".



Increasing Feeding Efficacy

Newborns feed 8-12 times daily. It takes time to build these skills at any age! Here are some ways to get more milk while feeding from your body:



Breast Compressions

These add pressure around the milk ducts so that your baby gets more milk when they suck. Hold, (don't slide), each one at least 3 seconds or more.



"Switch" Nursing

Most babies need to take both sides at every feed. With switch nursing, they feed on each side at least twice. Switching sides every 5-10 minutes can help them stay more alert while feeding and helps with milk flow.



Lean Back

Eating on your back is uncomfortable at any age. Babies feed best on their stomachs so lean back enough that gravity helps hold their tummy down on you. If this is not possible, like if they are drinking from a bottle, try an elevated side-lying position where they lay on their side with their head higher than their hips.



Top Up As Needed

As your baby is building their skills, they may need to top up after every chest feed. Topping up at this age is not a sign that your baby is not effective. It is just a sign they were born early. Responding to their needs is good teamwork.

Other medical providers not concerned?

For their medical care team, it is important that they are feeding and gaining weight - *how* they do that is up to each family.

Feeding challenges for this age are usually temporary. Patience and planning will help overcome early challenges.



Handouts

- [The First 2 Weeks](#)
- [Engorgement](#)
- [Positioning & Latching](#)
- [Responsive Bottle Feeding](#)
- [& Elevated Side-Lying](#)
- [Navigating Low Milk Supply](#)
- [Optimizing Pumping](#)

