

1. Does my baby need to eat anything else besides breast milk?

No, your baby shouldn't need to eat anything else besides breast milk, unless recommended by your doctor. Ask your pediatrician about vitamin D supplements. It is now recommended that all infants and children have a minimum daily intake of 400 IU of vitamin D beginning soon after birth.

2. What kind of diet is good to follow while I'm breastfeeding?

For women who are breastfeeding, an ideal diet includes a well-balanced variety of healthy foods, including dairy products, fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins. Most women can maintain a healthy milk supply while taking in at least 1,800–2,000 calories per day. It's helpful to minimize the amount of empty-calorie foods and eat much more nutrient-rich foods. It's also important to talk with your doctor about vitamins and include iron in your diet. Taking a supplement such as Similac® Breastfeeding Supplement is an easy way to get the vitamins, minerals, lutein, and DHA you and your baby need. *If you notice that your baby becomes upset after some feedings, it may be because of something you ate. If this happens, talk with your doctor; however, no one food or food group should be eliminated from your diet unless your baby has a very clear reaction to a specific food.*

3. Can I lose weight if I breastfeed my baby?

Breastfeeding often helps a mother get back to her pre-pregnancy weight for 2 reasons. First, the hormones involved in breastfeeding help the uterus shrink back to the size it was before you became pregnant. Second, you naturally burn calories in order to produce breast milk. To help you lose weight, limit or eliminate foods containing high levels of solid fats and added sugars, such as cookies, crackers, donuts, and pastries. Encourage yourself to eat healthy foods, which will increase your energy while providing nutritious milk for your baby. Also, many moms find that eating frequent, small, nutritious snacks and meals and drinking plenty of fluids helps them lose weight. *Breastfeeding mothers can begin exercising as soon as their doctors give them the OK.*

4. I'm going to have to go back to work. How can I continue to give my baby breast milk while I'm away?

You can continue giving your baby breast milk while you are away by expressing (pumping) breast milk to be bottle fed. Many women pump during the day while at work and breastfeed when they are at home. In order to pump breast milk at work, you'll need a pump, access to a clean, private area (not a bathroom), a place to store the breast milk (a breast milk cooler or refrigerator/freezer), breast milk storage bags/bottles, flexible break times, and a supportive company policy. Your employer may already have an established lactation program to help you get started.

5. Can you give me some information about expressing breast milk?

Hospital-grade electric pumps with double collecting systems provide the closest imitation of your baby's sucking action and are a great option if you will be pumping on a regular basis. If you're only going to be separated from your baby occasionally, you can also consider purchasing a hand pump.

6. What can I do to get dad involved?

Let him know he plays an important role in feeding time. Studies show that with a father's support, breastfeeding is more successful and continues for a longer period of time. To start, dad can prepare meals, help around the house, and, if you're expressing milk, he can take a turn and bottle feed, which will allow him to bond with baby.