

# Is my baby getting enough milk?

It is common for breastfeeding mothers to be unsure if their baby is getting enough milk. This fact sheet talks about the signs you can look for to know if your baby is getting enough milk.

## Remember...

- Feed your baby when he or she demands it. Your milk supply is suited to your baby's needs if you are demand feeding.
- Your baby may feed more often during growth spurts.
- The more you feed, the more milk you will make.
- Your baby will feed from you less if he or she is often sucking on a bottle or dummy.
- To know if your baby is getting enough milk, check their behaviour after a feed, their nappy, and weight.

## How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?

Check your baby for these signs. Your baby is getting enough milk if he or she:

- has at least 6 to 8 wet cloth nappies or 5 to 7 disposable nappies in 24 hours (after 3 to 4 days old). The colour should be a pale yellow
- often have runny bowel motions that are mustard-yellow colour. Sometimes this may change to green or orange. Breastfed babies may not have a dirty nappy every day but are rarely constipated. Your baby may have a dirty nappy less often as they get older
- has bright eyes, a moist mouth and good colour
- is mostly content after feeding. It is normal for babies to be unsettled somewhere in the day. This does not mean you are running out of milk at the end of the day
- is gaining weight well. Babies lose weight shortly after they are born but regain their birth weight by 2 weeks of age. After this, check your baby's growth often. Make sure it is recorded on the growth chart in your baby's Personal Health Record book. If your baby's growth follows the general pattern or curve of the graph he or she is getting enough breastmilk.

## Signs of hunger

Your [baby will let you know when they are hungry](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/docs/maternity/feeding-cues-term.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/docs/maternity/feeding-cues-term.pdf>) (PDF, 1.09MB). Feed your baby when they demand it.

Early signs that your baby is hungry may include:

- moving their head from side-to-side as if looking for your breast
- sucking their fist, fingers or thumbs
- turning their face into your breast.

Late signs that your baby is hungry may include:

- moving their head frantically from side-to-side
- crying—once your baby is crying it can be hard to get him or her to feed properly.

## Tips

- Your breasts may soften once your body has settled into breastfeeding. This does not mean you have a low supply. It means your milk supply has settled to your baby's needs.
- Breast size is not related to how much milk mothers produce.
- Take care of yourself. Make sure you eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of water.
- Your baby can't tell the time yet. In the first months of life, babies don't always become hungry at the same time each day. Feed according to need rather than on a schedule.
- Breasts respond to frequent feeding by producing more milk. If your baby is often sucking on a dummy or a bottle, they won't feed from you as often. This can mean your supply will decrease.
- Your baby will want to feed more often during growth spurts.
- How often your baby needs to feed and how long they take to feed differs a lot from one baby to the next.
- A one-off unusual measure when you check your baby's weight is not usually cause for concern. Double check the measure, use the same scales each time and weigh without clothes and nappy (or with a dry nappy).
- Talk to your health professional if you are still concerned your baby is not getting enough milk.

## Resources for parents, families and carers

URL: <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/421/is-my-baby-getting-enough-milk>

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Poster: [Baby feeding cues](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/docs/maternity/feeding-cues-term.pdf) (https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/docs/maternity/feeding-cues-term.pdf) (PDF, 1.09MB), Queensland Government

Growing Strong—Breastfeeding: [Good for Baby, good for Mum](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/resources/preganancy-atsih/good_for_baby_mum.pdf)

(https://www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/resources/preganancy-atsih/good\_for\_baby\_mum.pdf) (PDF, 637kB), Queensland Government

Raising Children Network—[Newborns nutrition](http://raisingchildren.net.au/nutrition/newborns_nutrition.html) (http://raisingchildren.net.au/nutrition/newborns\_nutrition.html), Australian Government

Raising Children Network—[Breastfeeding videos](http://raisingchildren.net.au/breastfeeding/breastfeeding_videos.html) (http://raisingchildren.net.au/breastfeeding/breastfeeding\_videos.html), Australian Government

Booklet: [Breastfeeding and postnatal care](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Breast_Feeding_and_Postnatal_Care)

(http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Breast\_Feeding\_and\_Postnatal\_Care), New South Wales Government—available in English, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Farsi, Hindi, Korean, Punjabi and Tamil languages

Booklet: [Breastfeeding your baby](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/MCFhealth/Publications/breastfeeding-your-baby.pdf) (http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/MCFhealth/Publications/breastfeeding-your-baby.pdf) (PDF, 3.6MB),

New South Wales Government

Fact sheet: [Breastfeeding tips for new mothers](http://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Planning_and_Population_Health/Health_Promotion/Healthy_Weight/docs/breastfeeding/Breastfeeding_Ne)

(http://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Planning\_and\_Population\_Health/Health\_Promotion/Healthy\_Weight/docs/breastfeeding/Breastfeeding\_Ne) (PDF, 111kB), New South Wales Government

[Breastfeeding your baby](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/breastfeeding) (https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/breastfeeding), Victoria Government

Brochure: [Breastfeeding](http://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/nutrition/2013NutritionBreastfeedingDEECD.pdf) (http://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/nutrition/2013NutritionBreastfeedingDEECD.pdf) (PDF, 1.3MB), Victoria Government

[Breastfeeding](http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicCategories.aspx?p=302) (http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicCategories.aspx?p=302), South Australia Government

## Related content

[Breastfeeding: How do I start breastfeeding?](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/221/breastfeeding-how-do-i-start-breastfeeding)

(http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/221/breastfeeding-how-do-i-start-breastfeeding)

[Common breastfeeding concerns: when do I stop breastfeeding?](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/268/common-breastfeeding-concerns-when-do-i-stop)

(http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/268/common-breastfeeding-concerns-when-do-i-stop)

[Breastfeeding a sleepy or unsettled baby](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/219/breastfeeding-a-sleepy-or-unsettled-baby)

(http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/219/breastfeeding-a-sleepy-or-unsettled-baby)

## Acknowledgements

This fact sheet is consistent with the *National breastfeeding strategy 2010–2015*.

Information is drawn from:

- Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service 2015, *Child health information: Your guide to the first 12 months*.
- National Health and Medical Research Council, 2012, *Infant feeding guidelines*.
- Preventative Health 2010, *Breastfeeding and your baby*, Queensland Health.
- Preventative Health 2008, *Growing Strong: Feeding you and your baby*, Queensland Health.
- Queensland Maternity and Neonatal Clinical Guidelines Program 2010, *Breastfeeding initiation*.

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