

Breastfeeding guidance

It's widely accepted that breastmilk is best for your baby. However, breastfeeding doesn't always come as naturally as some mums hope it will. It's not something that you or your baby will instinctively know how to do.

Don't be disappointed if you find things difficult at first. With the correct technique and some practice, you'll find that things get easier. We've created a guide to breastfeeding to show you how to ensure your baby's latching on correctly and how to recognise that your baby is feeding well.

Following these tips can also help:

- Sit comfortably in a supportive chair
- Hold your baby close, facing towards your body, and try to keep their head, shoulders and body in a straight line.
- Line up your baby's nose with your nipple, then gently nudge their mouth with it
- Once their mouth is wide open, wide, bring your baby up to your breast (not the other way round)
- If your baby is latched on correctly their bottom lip will be curled back and the only visible area of your areola (the dark skin around your nipple) is above your baby's top lip
- Listen for the sound of them swallowing – a sign they're taking milk in
- If your baby puts their hands in the way, try wrapping or swaddling them so that their arms are kept at their sides.

It's natural for your baby to pause from time to time. If you're finding feeding uncomfortable, try a supportive v-shaped pillow. Painful feeding could be caused by your baby not latching on properly – changing positions may help. Slip your finger between the nipple and their mouth to gently dislodge them and move them away from your breast and try to position them again.

If you're encountering any problems with breastfeeding or you're worried your baby isn't feeding as well as they should be, speak to your midwife or health visitor. Most problems can be overcome and breastfeeding is worth persevering with. You can also call our expert team of experienced feeding advisors or midwives on **08457 623 628**, Monday to Friday, 8am - 8pm, who'll do their best to help.