Healthy Habits: Breast Feeding

Providers can offer support and encouragement to breastfeeding mothers while their infant is in care.

Child care providers have a unique opportunity to shape young children’s healthy development, through promoting physical activity, screen time limitations, good nutrition, and healthy sleep practices.¹ The 4-C Food Program Tots at the Table initiative, funded by the ConAgra Foods Foundation, is designed to encourage child care providers to focus on promoting child wellness through setting personal goals related to child nutrition and physical activity.

Both children and their mothers have improved health outcomes when infants are breastfed exclusively for the first six months of life, and continued through the next year.² It is important to note that Iron Fortified Infant Formula is an acceptable alternative to breastfeeding, but there are significant benefits to breastfeeding. These benefits include a reduction in diarrhea, respiratory disease, urinary tract infections, SIDS, allergic disease, ear infections, and more. It has also been suggested that breastfeeding can reduce risk for childhood obesity.

Providers play an important role in encouraging and supporting the breast feeding mother to provide the nutrition for their infant, thus maintaining that feeding relationship between mother and baby. Breast milk can be used as part of the feeding of other infant foods. Breast milk can be combined with cereal that is being served to the infant.

This packet includes background on handling and serving breast milk, nutrition information for breastfeeding mothers, ideas for creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment, and tips on making your own baby food.

Best Practices:
- Child care homes should encourage, provide arrangements for, and support breastfeeding.
- It is helpful to have a designated space for breastfeeding mothers.
- Bottle feeding techniques should mimic approaches to breastfeeding (initiate when the infant provides cues, hold the infant while feeding, allow breaks for burping, allow the infant to stop the feeding).


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ConAgra Foods Foundation

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Activities

Creating a Comfortable Environment for Breast Feeding

Although you may not always be able to control your surroundings, it is still possible for a nursing mother to create the conditions that support a calm and relaxed environment for mother and baby to bond, connect, and nurture the breast feeding relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Public</th>
<th>At Home</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you are at a social gathering or public setting you should feel confident by making adaptations to your surroundings to provide comfort for you and your baby.</td>
<td>At home create a space just for you and your baby to relax and enjoy your special time together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bring a receiving blanket to alleviate noise, bright lights and distractions.</td>
<td>- Sit in a comfortable chair or lie in bed. Have adequate pillows, a blanket or other personal items to ensure that you and your baby are always comfortable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Finding a quiet area, such as a room with a comfortable chair will help baby and mother to relax to focus on breast feeding.</td>
<td>- Listening to a relaxed CD, of your favorite music played at a volume where your voice can easily be heard by the infant will help to increase both mother and baby’s comfort as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- You can bring a pillow along too to make you even more comfortable.</td>
<td>- Lower lighting may create a softer environment for the mom to relax during the feeding. (However if light is too low infants can have a tendency to fall asleep during feeding).</td>
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Breathing and focused attention can relieve tension, make mother more aware of her own body and allowing you to feel more relaxed and comfortable. This is time exclusively for baby and mother to enjoy the closeness and rewards that breastfeeding provides, that of meeting the nutritional and nurturing needs of you and your baby. This relationship creates a lasting bond and connection between you and your baby that will last a lifetime.

Proper Preparation and Serving of Breast Milk

A separate area or space in the kitchen should be provided to prepare breast milk or formula to ensure proper safe handling and use of infant foods. This could be on a counter or cupboard away from other foods, or possible contaminants. Always wash hands before preparing bottles or feeding the infant.

Proper Handling and Storage of Breast Milk

Here are a few suggestions a provider should keep in mind when feeding infants to ensure the safety of the breast milk:

- All bottles or bags of breast milk brought for use at the day care should be labeled and dated by the parent.
- Breast milk should be refrigerated or frozen immediately upon arrival until ready for use. (Ask parent for instructions as to how to store and prepare breast milk).
- To avoid spoilage do not allow the breast milk to stand at room temperature unless it is to be served promptly after it is prepared.
- Bottles of breast milk should be kept in a 40 degree or below refrigerator and discarded after 48 hours to assure quality and safety of the breast milk.
- Breast milk can be stored in a freezer with a separate door, for 3 months.
- Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator or freezer.
- Rotate breast milk by using the oldest milk first, rotating the supply as the mother brings the milk. Labeled bottles will help in the process of rotation.
- Once frozen breast milk is thawed, use it within 24 hours and do not refreeze.
- Frozen breast milk can be thawed by running it under 8 temperature.
- Warm breast milk by placing the bottle in a glass or pan of warm water.
- Do not warm breast milk in the microwave or the stove. Microwaving can cause “hot spots,” in the milk that can burn the baby’s mouth or throat. Heating also destroys most of the natural substance in the breast milk that help protect babies from illnesses.
- After infant feeding throw out “leftover” breast milk in bottle and do not reuse or save.

Child care providers and mothers in Dane County can consult public health nurses about breastfeeding at 608.243.0449.
Homemade Baby Food

Making your own baby food can be an economical, easy alternative to buying jars of baby food. With some advanced planning, you can prepare homemade baby food.

Tips for Making Homemade Baby Food

- Work under the most sanitary conditions possible.
- Wash your hands with hot water and soap, scrub, rinse and dry with a clean towel before fixing your baby’s food, before feeding your baby, and after changing your baby’s diapers.
- Scrub all working surfaces with soap and hot water.
- Scrub all equipment with soap and hot water, and rinse well.
- Prepare fresh fruits or vegetables by scrubbing, paring or peeling, and removing seeds.
- Prepare meats by removing all bones, skin, connective tissue, gristle and fat.
- Cook foods, when necessary, boiling them in a small, covered saucepan with a small amount of water until tender. The amount of water is important — the less water used, the more nutrients stay in the food.
- Puree food using a blender, food processor, baby food grinder, spoon or fork. Grind up tough foods. Cut food into small pieces or thin slices. Take out seeds and pits from fruit.
- Test for smoothness by rubbing a small amount of food between your fingers. Add a liquid such as formula, water or fruit juice to achieve a desired consistency.
- If pureed food is not being used right away, refrigerate quickly.
- To freeze: pour cooled, pureed food into a paper cupcake liner or a section of a clean ice cube tray, and cover with foil. When frozen solid, store cubes in a freezer container in the freezer in a freezer bag or box.
- Reheat frozen cubes in a heat-resistant container in a pan of hot water.
- When cooking foods for the family, remember to separate the baby’s portion before adding seasoning or spices. Babies need very little, if any, added salt or sugar.

1 http://umaine.edu/publications/4309e/

Strawberry-Spinach Salad

4 cups spinach leaves, torn into bite-sized pieces, 1 pint of strawberries, stemmed and halved, 1 small onions sliced and separated into rings, ½ cup prepared non-fat honey-mustard dressing. Divide spinach onto 4 individual plates. Arrange strawberries, onions rings and drizzle each salad with 2 tablespoons dressing. Serves 4.

Tortilla-to-Go

Spread a whole-wheat tortilla with (canned) fried beans, chopped tomatoes, avocado (optional) and shredded cheese. Melt in a microwave oven briefly before serving.
Family Information

Nutrition for Breast Feeding Mothers

Nursing mothers are providing all the nutritional needs for their baby first and for their own nutritional needs second. The amount of breast milk produced to feed their baby is reflected in their own diet. It’s easy to support the nutritional needs of the baby and mother through conscious thought and planning.

Nursing mothers’ need at least 500 calories more per day or a 2500 calorie diet.

Nursing mother’s produce 23 - 27 ounces of milk per day, which provides 330 milligrams of calcium to the diets of the infant.

Nursing mothers should focus on eating a variety of foods to assure a nutritional balanced diet for the baby and the mother.

Recommended Diet Plan for the Breast Feeding Mother

The recipes on the previous page are excellent for nursing mothers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROTEIN</th>
<th>3 Servings</th>
<th>Such as poultry, lean cuts of red meat, fish, beans, lentils, or peas, dairy foods - cheese, yogurt or soy products - tofu, tempeh, soybeans.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALCIUM</td>
<td>5 Servings</td>
<td>From dairy, dark green leafy vegetables and fortified calcium sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRON RICH</td>
<td>1-2 Servings</td>
<td>Meat, green leafy vegetables etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITAMIN C</td>
<td>2 Servings</td>
<td>Green and yellow and orange fruits and vegetables - such as oranges, orange, yellow or green peppers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER FRUITS &amp; VEGETABLES</td>
<td></td>
<td>That contain folic acid (for brain development) and other important nutrients Vitamin A and E - Dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, cabbage, broccoli, fruits - strawberries, oranges, melon, tomatoes, avocados. Nuts/legumes - dried beans and peas, nuts and seeds - Grains folic-enriched cereals, wheat germ and whole grains. Meats - liver and organ meats. Dairy - low-fat milk yogurt and cheese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHA-RICH FOODS</td>
<td></td>
<td>To promote brain development of the baby - such as salmon, sardines and walnuts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHOLE GRAINS</td>
<td>3+ Servings</td>
<td>Focusing on complex carbohydrates - three or more servings - whole wheat bread products, pasta, rice etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATER</td>
<td>8 Cups</td>
<td>Water, juice, or other non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic beverages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRENATAL VITAMIN</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>To provide minerals and micro nutrients to the diet.</td>
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