



## DAD'S AND BREASTFEEDING

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### HOW DADS CAN HELP WITH BREASTFEEDING

Years ago, more mothers and fathers expected to take on set roles after a baby's birth. Most often, dad went to work and mom stayed home with baby. Breastfeeding was the mother's job alone. Today, dads tend to be more active in baby care and parenting. If your partner breastfeeds, you can still be an active parent. In fact, your help is vital in making breastfeeding work. Here are some of the many ways you can help with breastfeeding:



- **Help her get comfortable.** Be sure she has what she needs. Help her with pillows. Bring her some thing to drink. Does she need a stool for her feet?
- **Check how baby is latched on.** She may not have a good view from her angle. Offer to adjust her pillows. Help her relax.
- **Help her get her sleep.** Remind her to nap when baby sleeps during the day. Offer to do her chores so that she can rest. Help her get baby latched on at night while lying down so she can doze off. She needs rest to help her recover from birth.
- **Run errands for her** so that she can focus on baby.
- **Spend time with older children** to help her rest and relax with baby.
- **Cook a meal.** And shop to make sure she also has healthy snacks.
- **Make sure she has help.** Arrange for others to do these things for her when you can't be there.
- **Protect her privacy.** Limit visitors. Act as a buffer with those who don't support her. Be vocal about your support with others.
- **Talk and listen.** Share thoughts and feelings. While your roles are changing, it is vital to talk. Be honest about good and bad feelings. Give respect even when feelings run high.

When mom is out and you care for your baby, you can give pumped mother's milk. In some families, dad stays home with baby while mother works outside the home. In this case, mother can breastfeed while home and pump her milk while away.

### GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BREASTFEEDING BABY

Some dads wonder how they can relate to their newborn if they are not giving regular bottles. The good news is that there are lots of ways other than feeding to get close to a small baby.

If you haven't spent much time with babies before, first know that they don't break. Babies love to be touched. Pick up and gently hold your baby. Here are some other things your baby will enjoy and will help the two of you become closer:

- **Give your baby a bath.** This can be a fun time for both of you.
- **Change your baby's diaper.** This gets easy with practice. And when your baby is fully breastfed, diapers don't smell bad.
- **Bring your baby to your partner for feedings.** Yes, even during the night!
- **Spend time with your baby.** Put baby on your bare chest. Babies love to feel your skin against theirs.
- **Cuddle and walk.** This can help during fussy times. Movement calms babies.
- **Talk and sing to your baby.** This is how babies learn to talk.
- **Hold your baby.** This will help give your partner time to take a shower or eat her meal.
- **Give your baby a massage.** This soothes baby and feels good to you, too.



*This is general information and does not replace the advice of your physician or healthcare provider.  
If you have a problem you cannot solve quickly, seek help right away.  
Every baby is different, and your baby may not be average.  
If in doubt, contact your physician or other healthcare provider.*