

# Difficulty Latching

---

If you are having trouble latching your baby to the breast, we recommend that you temporarily follow this plan. This plan will ensure that your baby is getting enough milk and that you are protecting your milk supply.

## 1. Attempt to Latch Your Baby About Every 2–3 Hours (OPTIONAL)

Maintain skin-to-skin contact with your baby as much as you like.

Watch for early feeding cues (rooting, lip smacking, tongue darting). This is the ideal time to try to breastfeed.

If your baby is frustrated and crying at the breast, let your baby suck on your finger to calm them. Then try latching again. If this doesn't work, hand express and give your baby about 5–10mL of colostrum or breast milk to help calm them. Then try latching again.

## 2. Feed Your Baby

If latching is not successful (OR if you skip step 1), feed your baby following the guidelines below.

Track your baby's output. If their output is low, increase the volume you are feeding.

Use expressed colostrum, expressed/pumped breast milk, or infant formula to feed your baby. Once you begin to offer 15mL (0.5 oz.) or more, use paced bottle-feeding technique.

Baby's Age	Baby's Total Intake per feeding (at least 8 in 24 hours)	Minimum Output
0–24 hours	2–10mL (via spoon)	1 pee, 1 poop (meconium)
24–48 hours	5–15mL (via spoon or finger feeding)	2 pees, 2 poops
48–72 hours	15–30mL (0.5–1 oz.)	3 pees, 3 poops
72–96 hours	30–45mL (1–1.5 oz.)	4 pees, 3 poops (transitional stool)
5–7 days	45–60mL (1.5–2 oz.)	5 pees, 3 poops (yellow, seedy)
1–2 weeks	60mL (2 oz.)	5 pees, 3 poops (yellow, seedy)
2–3 weeks	60–90mL (2–3 oz.)	5 pees, 3 poops (yellow, seedy)
3–4 weeks +	75–120mL (2.5–4 oz.)	5 pees, 3 poops (yellow, seedy)

### 3. Protect Your Milk Supply

*If your baby is not latching*, it is **critical** that you use a breast pump to remove milk and to stimulate your breasts to encourage an adequate milk supply. If your baby is not latching, your body *does not know* that it needs to make breast milk, **unless you pump**.

Pump your breasts once for each feeding you provide your baby that is not at the breast. For example, if your baby latches 3 times in a 24-hour period, and you need to feed via spoon or bottle for the other 5+ feedings, you should pump your breasts each time (5 times in a 24-hour period). If you are unable to latch your baby at all, pump your breasts 8+ times in a 24-hour period. Do not go longer than one stretch of 5 hours in each 24-hour period without pumping your breasts. The rest of your pumping sessions should be every 2–3 hours.

*For the first 3 days, before your milk is in*, hand express before each pumping session to collect colostrum. Colostrum is difficult to collect via pump. Feed this colostrum back to your baby, then pump both breasts for about 20 minutes.

*Once your milk is in*, pump both breasts for about 20 minutes each time. If you are still collecting milk after 20 minutes, you can go up to 30 minutes per session. Use the *highest, comfortable* suction level while you pump. We recommend using a high quality, double electric breast pump. Review your breast pump's manual to determine proper flange fit and correct usage of pump settings.

When you pump, your nipples should move freely in the flanges without rubbing and very little of your areola should not be pulled into the tunnel part of the flanges. If your nipples are rubbing, you may need a larger size. If much of your areola is pulled into the tunnel part of the flanges, you may need a smaller size.

*Do not be discouraged* if you are unable to pump enough milk to meet your baby's demand at first. Sometimes, it takes time (and consistent pumping) to establish the milk supply.

### 4. See Us for an In-Person Appointment

We can help you latch your baby to the breast, assess your milk supply, determine which factors are impacting your baby's ability to latch, and develop a personalized plan for you.