

Taking a Break from Latching

If breastfeeding is painful and/or your nipples are very sore or damaged (cracked, blistered, scabbed, bleeding), we recommend that you **take a break from latching** your baby. This will give your nipples a chance to heal and/or prevent the pain you experience with latching. You will pump your breasts in order to **protect your milk supply** during this break. You may want to take a break for a few feedings, for a full day, or for multiple days. As long as you are pumping to protect your supply, we can work to get your baby back to the breast once you feel ready.

1. Pump to Replace Each Breastfeeding Session

You should pump in place of each breastfeeding session that you skip. For example, if you want to skip 2 or 3 feedings, you should pump 2–3 times to replace those feedings.

Your body needs at least 8 stimulations in a 24-hour period, so if you are not latching at all, you should pump both breasts at least 8 times in 24 hours.

You do NOT need to pump at the exact time that your baby is eating. You should aim to pump or breastfeed about every 2–3 hours, but you can go up to one stretch of 5 hours overnight between feeding/pumping (as long as someone else can feed your baby a bottle during this time).

2. Ease into Pumping

If your nipples are very sore or cracked, you may need to ease into pumping. Pumping should feel more comfortable than latching.

Center your nipples in your flanges and turn the pump on. Gradually increase the suction level to the highest, comfortable setting. If it hurts, turn it down. You may need to start on a lower suction but will be able to increase throughout the pumping session, or at the next pumping session, or on the next day.

Pump both breasts for about 15–20 minutes each time. If milk is still flowing at 20 minutes, you can go up to 30 minutes.

3. Feed Your Baby

For feedings when you do NOT directly latch your baby, feed your baby following the guidelines below.

Use expressed colostrum, expressed/pumped breast milk, or infant formula to feed 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)
0-24 hours	2-10mL (via spoon)
24-48 hours	5-15mL (via spoon or finger feeding)
48-72 hours	15-30mL (0.5-1 oz.)
72-96 hours	30-45mL (1-1.5 oz.)
5-7 days	45-60mL (1.5-2 oz.)
1-2 weeks	60mL (2 oz.)
2-3 weeks	60-90mL (2-3 oz.)
3-4 weeks +	75-120mL (2.5-4 oz.)

4. See Us for an In-Person Appointment

We can be sure your nipples are healing appropriately, determine which factors are causing you pain or discomfort, help you move back to direct breastfeeding, and develop a personalized feeding plan for you and your baby.