

9L 1: HANDOUTS FOR CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITIES - BREASTFEEDING TIPS

GETTING BABY TO LATCH: BABY'S CUES

Babies have distinct signs (or cues) that they use to show caregivers when they are hungry and full. Recognizing a baby's feeding cues can be incredibly helpful for successful breastfeeding. When mothers are able to notice early cues that a baby is hungry, breastfeeding is often much smoother.

FEEDING CUES:

- ⇒ Hands to mouth
- ⇒ Sucking on their hands or fingers
- ⇒ Increased movement of the mouth and/or tongue
- ⇒ Rooting (turning the head to the side when the lips/cheeks are touched)
- ⇒ Subtle body movements
- ⇒ Increased alertness
- ⇒ Slight opening of the eyes
- ⇒ Flexed arms and/or legs and clenched fists



This baby is becoming more alert and mouthing his hand to show that he is hungry.



Crying is the last feeding cue that a baby provides when they are hungry. It will happen when all other subtler feeding cues have been missed by the caregiver.

GETTING BABY TO LATCH: BASIC STEPS FOR LATCHING

17 STEPS

DESCRIPTIONS (WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE)

① *Nose to Nipple*



② *Head Tilt*



③ *Latch On*



- Aim baby's nose to the nipple of the breast.
- Once aligned, move baby 2.5-7.5 cm (1-3 inches) away from the nipple.

- After aiming, baby's head will slightly tilt back allowing her mouth to gape open for latching.
- Gently bring baby back to the breast to latch.

- Baby latches onto the breast and begins to suck.
- Repeat above steps if baby does not gape mouth or latch well.

GETTING BABY TO LATCH: LIP STIMULATION

Sometimes babies will need gentle stimulation (or touch) to their lips using the nipple to encourage them to open their mouths widely and begin sucking. This is called lip stimulation.

Directions:

- ① Lightly touch the nipple to the baby's lower lip, gently moving it from side to side. This should stimulate a wide, open mouth (gape) from baby.
- ② Wait for baby to open her mouth widely.
- ③ After opening her mouth, gently move baby toward you so she can latch onto the breast.



Bring baby to you instead of bringing the breast to baby.

GETTING BABY TO LATCH: SUCKING TO EAT? OR SUCKING FOR COMFORT?

Babies will use breastfeeding for nourishment (nutritive sucking). Babies will also use breastfeeding for comfort (non-nutritive sucking) where they are not seeking to receive breastmilk and become full. Sucking is a powerful movement that not only helps babies grow and be well nourished, but it also helps them become calm and happy. It is very common for babies to use both nutritive and non-nutritive sucking during the day and night. It is helpful to understand this difference and recognize when a baby is sucking for food or for pleasure, especially when there are concerns about if a baby is getting enough to eat from the breast.



NON-NUTRITIVE SUCKING (A):

Jaw moves in an up and down (piston-like) motion.

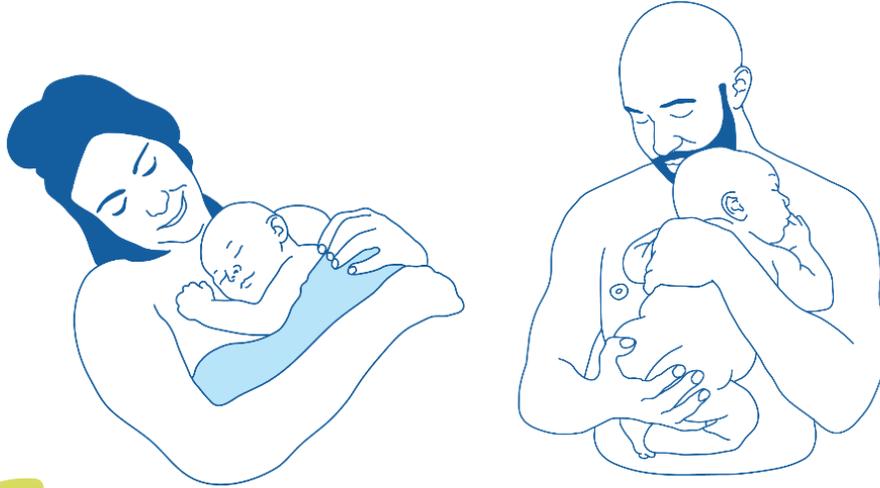


NUTRITIVE SUCKING (B):

Jaw moves in a back and forth (rocker-like) motion.

GETTING BABY TO LATCH: SKIN TO SKIN

When a baby can be close to his mother and/or father and have his skin touch theirs, it is incredibly calming. It is also helpful for getting a baby ready to breastfeed. Skin to skin (also called “Kangaroo Care”) is when a mother or father holds a bare baby to their own bare chest. This is a wonderful way for new babies to adjust to living outside of their mother’s womb. It can be done as often as a baby needs, and is typically most beneficial for newborn babies.



A mother and father practice skin to skin with their newborn babies.