

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING



SKIN TO SKIN CONTACT

Supporting your baby's first breastfeeding experience involves understanding their innate abilities and facilitating skin-to-skin contact:

- Natural Readiness: Babies are born with a strong instinct to breastfeed, often ready to do so within the first hour.
- The Importance of Skin-to-Skin: Immediately after birth, placing your undressed baby (except for diaper and hat) tummy-down on your bare chest (or your partner's) and covering them with blankets is crucial.
- Why Skin-to-Skin Helps: This close contact leads to: * Improved latching. * Better temperature regulation. * More stable heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure. * Higher and more stable blood sugar. * Reduced crying and increased calmness for both parent and baby. * A greater likelihood of exclusive and longer breastfeeding. * Clear cues from the baby when they are ready to nurse.

BREASTFEEDING EXCLUSIVELY

How long you breastfeed is a journey you and your baby take together. Here are some expert recommendations to consider:

- For the first 6 months, aim for exclusive breastfeeding—no formula, water, or other foods—unless medically advised.
- After that, continue to breastfeed for a year or longer, for as long as it's mutually desired by both of you.

Why Exclusive Breastfeeding Matters: Supplementing with other liquids or formula can have these potential downsides:

- It might make your baby less interested in breastfeeding, which can decrease your milk supply.
- The use of artificial nipples or pacifiers can reduce the frequency and duration of breastfeeding, ultimately signaling your body to produce less milk.

ROOMING IN

Just like spending time with someone helps you understand them better, rooming-in fosters a deeper connection and offers significant advantages for both you and your newborn:

- **A Deeper Understanding:** You'll learn your baby's cues more quickly, and they'll become familiar with your presence.
- **Easier Breastfeeding:** Rooming-in makes it simpler to breastfeed on demand, which can lead to increased milk supply and longer breastfeeding duration.
- **Enhanced Bonding:** Close proximity strengthens the bond between you, your baby, and your family.
- **A Calmer Baby:** Babies who room-in tend to cry less, are easier to soothe, and experience more restful sleep.
- **Healthier Baby:** Rooming-in is linked to babies taking in more milk, gaining weight well, and having a lower risk of jaundice.
- **Peaceful Rest:** Being close often leads to more quiet and peaceful sleep for both mother and baby.

LACTATION ASSISTANCE

Need breastfeeding support? Schneck offers several resources to help you succeed:

- Our team includes highly trained staff nurses, certified lactation counselors, and a board-certified lactation consultant, ready to provide expert assistance.
- Join our **Breastfeeding Support Group** for expert advice and connection with other breastfeeding mothers. Meets every Wednesday from 9-11 AM.
- Prepare for success by attending our **Breastfeeding Class**, offered one evening each month.

You might especially benefit from speaking with a lactation consultant if you have a history of breast surgery, a previous challenging breastfeeding experience, or any specific questions or concerns about breastfeeding or medical reasons why it might be difficult.