

Baby's Behavior – The First Few Days

If you have any questions, talk to your nurse or lactation consultant.

The first few days after birth are when you and your baby will begin getting to know each other. This brochure will help you know what kind of behavior to expect from your baby.

The first 24 hours

After the work of labor and birth, many babies will have a sleepy first 24 hours. However, you may find the sucking reflex is very strong in the first few hours after birth. It's normal for baby to take frequent, small feedings (cluster feeding).

The second night

After the first 24 hours, your baby will begin to “wake up” from the sleepy phase. Because your baby will now be in the new outside world, they may feel a little anxious. They may seem to be fussy and irritable. You may notice that your baby is:

- More active at night
- Most content at your breast
- Wanting to breastfeed all the time
- Falling asleep at the breast, but waking up as soon as you try to move them

These are ways your baby will be coping with their new surroundings. Your baby will be telling you that they want to be close to you because you are safe and warm. This reminds them of being in the womb. As long as your baby is sucking well and swallowing, this fussiness does not mean that your baby is hungry or not getting enough to eat.

Comforting baby on the second night

You can soothe your baby in the following ways:

- Allow your baby to breastfeed as often as they want (on demand).
- Hold your baby skin-to-skin.
- Wait until baby is in a deep sleep and then place your baby on their back in the bassinet.
- Keep the lights and noise at a low level.
- Hold your baby, but avoid too much activity by passing baby from visitor to visitor.

After the second night

During the first 2 to 3 days of breastfeeding, you will provide your baby with colostrum (early breast milk). You will start to produce mature breast milk about 3 to 5 days after birth. This is often called “when your milk comes in.” Allowing your baby to feed on demand will help stimulate your breasts to make the milk that your baby needs. Soon, you and your baby will have a regular breastfeeding pattern.