

Feeding Your Baby

Deciding whether to breastfeed or formula feed your baby is a very important decision. At Bronson, we want to help you make the best choice for you and your baby. We will help and support you before your baby is born, during your hospital stay and after you go home. This is done through:

- Free prenatal consults by appointment Monday-Friday from 10am-3pm.
- Daily visits by a lactation consultant during your hospital stay. We provide support for infant feeding and can do extra visits by request.
- Telephone consults 7 days a week from 8 am to 7 pm at 269-341-8849.
- Free outpatient consults by appointment after you leave the hospital.
- Asking your lactation consultant about local breastfeeding resources.
- Reviewing the **Your Childbirth Experience** book your provider gave you or visiting <http://www.bronsonhealth.com/services/pregnancy-childbirth/education>.

What does my pediatrician say?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends only breastfeeding for 6 months. Once solid foods are introduced, continue to breastfeed. You may continue to breastfeed for 1 year or longer as desired by you and your baby.

Benefits of only breastfeeding:

- Breastfeeding after birth boosts an infant's immune system. This reduces the chance of newborn death as much as **20%**.
- The rate of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is reduced by **over a third** in breastfed babies.
- Protects your baby from infections by sharing your **immunities and antibodies**.
- Breast milk is **easily digested**. It is perfect nutrition for babies.
- Breastfeeding promotes **bonding** between mom and baby. It supports your baby's **emotional** well-being.
- Studies suggest breastfed children have **higher IQs**.
- There is a **15-30% decrease** in teenage and adult obesity in breast fed infants.
- Mothers who breastfeed have a **lower possibility** of breast and ovarian cancer, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis.
- It is **cost-effective and convenient** (no water needed and no washing bottles).
- Breastfeeding helps mothers return to their pre-baby weight sooner.

How do I make enough milk for my baby?

- Your body begins making milk during your pregnancy. This is to be ready for your baby's first feeding in the hour after delivery. This is the perfect first meal for your baby and the start of a strong bond.
- After delivery, milk production is no longer automatic. It becomes a "supply and demand" response. To match your milk supply with your baby's needs, you need to breastfeed as often as your baby wants. Your baby may want to nurse a lot. Not more than 3 hours should

go by between feeds (8 to 12 feedings in 24 hours). The more you feed your baby, the more milk you make!

- Newborns are very sleepy! Your baby should breastfeed for about 10-20 minutes on each breast with every feeding. You will need to help the baby get a good latch. Your support person may need to help the baby stay awake. The more milk your baby takes, the more milk you make!

● How will I know when my baby is hungry?

- When your baby has the most energy to breastfeed, your baby will:
 - Turn their head from side to side, lick their lips, stretch or “root” to search for you with their mouth.
 - Cry. This is the last message your baby sends to tell you they are hungry. This can make it harder to latch your baby. Crying uses much of your baby’s energy that is best used to breastfeed. Try to start feeding your baby before they cry.

● How will I know my baby is getting enough?

- A few ways to tell your baby is getting enough is by:
 - The number of wet and poopy diapers they have each day.
 - How your baby’s weight changes.
 - The appearance of your baby. Your baby should look calm and satisfied after feeding.
- You should keep track of how often your baby eats, how long each feeding lasts, and each time they have a wet or poopy diaper.

● How do I get off to the best start?

- The more “skin to skin” time you spend with your baby the better! Your baby feels the most secure when they are chest to chest with you. They are more alert and eat better which means you make more milk. Your body will warm them up if they are cold with just a blanket over their back and a hat on their head. Skin to skin time helps your baby adjust to life outside the womb.
- “Room-in” with your baby. Keeping your baby in the room with you helps you learn your baby’s needs. It encourages frequent “on-demand” feedings at their first hunger cue. This results in better breastfeeding and increases your milk supply. Be sure to follow guidelines for safe sleep.
- Avoid pacifiers. Pacifiers make it hard for your baby to show you their early hunger cues. They may not feed as often. They may use their energy to suck on the pacifier that should be used to feed. This can hurt your milk supply.
- Avoid bottles when possible. The staff will help you understand how well your baby is breastfeeding. They will help you know if your baby needs a “supplement” or nutrition other than breastfeeding. If your baby receives early formula from a bottle they can forget how to breastfeed. A bottle flows much differently than milk through the breast. They may also nurse less frequently, which can affect your milk supply.
- Ask lots of questions!

Bronson Breastfeeding Center
Kalamazoo (269) 341-8849
Battle Creek (269) 245-8586