

# How To Care for A Breastfed Baby on Expressed Breast Milk (EBM)

The role of a caregiver is very important to ensure baby grows healthily and happily. If you're caring for a breastfed baby while his mum is away at work, here are some tips for a rewarding experience:

## Feeding a breastfed baby

- Breastfed babies feed when hungry and stop when full. Follow the baby's hunger signals, not a schedule.
- Breastfed babies may have smaller, more frequent feeds because breast milk is easily digested.
- Many breastfed babies need time to learn to take milk from a cup/ bottle.
  - » It's recommended that breastfed babies be given EBM by cup to avoid nipple-confusion and ensure latching on continues with mum. This helps breastfeeding to continue longer.
  - » However, if cup-feeding is challenging, especially for older babies, EBM can be given with a bottle.
  - » Try feeding baby when he's a little sleepy, and when he isn't hungry or upset.
  - » Run some warm water over the teat – breastfed babies are not used to cold nipples.
- Hold baby close when feeding.
- Never prop a bottle up and leave baby alone during a feeding.
- Breastfed babies love to snuggle. Comfort and hold baby close for a while before offering more milk.

### Some common hunger cues:

- Increased eye movement.
- Opening his mouth and stretching out his tongue while turning his head around to look for your breast.
- Making soft whimpering sounds.
- Sucking on hands, fingers or any nearby objects.
- Crying softly and gradually louder (Crying is usually the last hunger sign.)

## Supporting Mum

- Try not to give baby a full feed if mum is coming home within an hour or two.
- Try to calm baby in other ways, or just offer a very small amount to take the edge off his hunger.

## How to handle expressed breast milk (EBM)

- It's safe to handle EBM – you don't need to wear gloves or take special precautions.
- EBM may appear watery or have a bluish tint, or may look yellow when frozen. If the creamy part of the milk separates and rises to the top, gently shake the container to blend it together.
- EBM can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer, and thawed as needed. Follow these guidelines carefully:

- 1 Human milk can be stored in the freezer for up to 6 months.
- 2 Milk that will not be used within 48 hours should be frozen, not refrigerated.
- 3 Thaw frozen milk under warm water or use a warmer. Never microwave breast milk.
- 4 Once milk is warmed, use it immediately, only for that designated feeding session.
- 5 Milk left in the bottle after feeding should be discarded.
- 6 Milk that has been thawed should not be refrozen. It can be kept in refrigerator (4°C or colder) for up to 24 hours and at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours.

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