



LEARN, START, OVERCOME, AND THRIVE: Your Breastfeeding Journey

Breastfeeding is a journey, with ups and downs and feelings of frustration and accomplishment. Your experience will be unique to you and your baby. WIC is here to help every step of the way, no matter what stage of the breastfeeding journey you're in.

LEARN

Prepare to breastfeed.

- Learn about the benefits.
- Talk with your local WIC clinic about their breastfeeding support services.
- Attend classes and events at your WIC clinic to learn what to expect when you breastfeed.
- Develop a breastfeeding plan and set goals.
- Tell your family, friends, and employer about your desire to breastfeed and help them understand how they can support you.
- Take a tour of your hospital or birthing center and let them know you want to breastfeed.
- Learn about breastfeeding laws.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**WIC
BREASTFEEDING
SUPPORT**

LEARN TOGETHER. GROW TOGETHER.

START

As soon as you give birth, start breastfeeding. Then keep practicing.

- Hold your baby skin to skin and breastfeed within the first hour after birth, if possible.
- Maintain your milk supply. Ask others not to give your baby other fluids unless medically necessary.
- Plan to feed your baby 8 to 12 times in a 24-hour period.
- Contact the lactation consultant at the hospital or your local WIC clinic to get help with positioning your baby, finding a good latch, learning your baby's hunger signs, or whatever else you may need.
- Schedule follow-up visits with your baby's doctor, your WIC peer counselor, and WIC clinic.
- Take care of yourself—eat nutritious foods, and get rest when you can.



OVERCOME

You may experience challenges with breastfeeding. But eventually it gets easier.

- Know the signs for and how to manage common breastfeeding problems, including sore nipples, engorgement, milk supply issues, and infections.
- Be prepared for cluster feedings, growth spurts, nursing strikes, and other things your baby may go through.
- Reach out to WIC for its breastfeeding support services.
- Ask your friends and family to help you take care of your baby—and you! They can change diapers, give baths, do laundry, run errands, make dinner, and more.
- Find out how milk expression can be a solution for common challenges. Practice expressing milk using a breast pump or hand expression so you can provide breast milk for your baby when you are apart.
- Take breastfeeding day by day.

THRIVE

You're a breastfeeding pro!

- Celebrate the milestones.
- Congratulate yourself. You did it!
- Share your success with other moms. Find out about becoming a peer counselor.

For more resources, visit:
WICBreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov

