



# Breastfeeding



## Plan ahead to ask the right questions and manage your health

Breastfeeding is best for your baby. Breastfed babies are sick less often, and they are less likely to develop health problems like asthma, diabetes, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and some types of cancer. It is also good for mothers. Moms who nurse their babies are less likely to go on to get breast cancer, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and ovarian cancer. Babies should be breastfed for at least 12 months, and should not have any other kind of food or drink for the first six months.<sup>1</sup>

### Tips for success

With the right support, most women are able to breastfeed. To get ready, read about breastfeeding and take a class while you're pregnant. Talk to friends and family who have breastfed. Let your doctor know you plan to nurse your baby, and that you would like to breastfeed as soon as you are able – within an hour of birth, the baby's sucking instinct is strongest.<sup>2</sup> You may feel that this does not come naturally to you or to your baby, but with patience most mother-and-baby pairs catch on quickly. Your doctor, nurse and the hospital's lactation consultant are all there to help.

### Get off to a good start

During your hospital stay:<sup>3</sup>

- Keep your baby in the room with you.
- Don't give your baby pacifiers or formula.
- Put your baby to your breast when he or she cries. Don't worry about feeding your baby too much or spoiling him or her.
- Ask to talk to the hospital's lactation consultant, if you have questions.

### Help for nursing moms

To learn more about breastfeeding, or how to get through some of the common challenges, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' site on women's health, at [womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding](http://womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding). You can also find support and information on topics like getting ready to go back to work at La Leche League International's website, [llli.org](http://llli.org).



Sources

1 American Academy of Pediatrics website, Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk (accessed February 2017): [www.aappolicy.appublications.org](http://www.aappolicy.appublications.org).

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health website, Your Guide to Breastfeeding (accessed February 2017): [www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/breastfeeding-guide/Your-Guide-to-Breastfeeding-508\\_final.pdf](http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/breastfeeding-guide/Your-Guide-to-Breastfeeding-508_final.pdf).

3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, The CDC Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies (accessed February 2017): [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/BF-Guide-508.PDF](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/BF-Guide-508.PDF).

4 National Business Group on Health website, Investing in Workplace Breastfeeding Programs and Policies (accessed February 2017): [www.businessgrouphealth.org](http://www.businessgrouphealth.org).

5 United States Breastfeeding Committee website, Federal Workplace Law (accessed February 2017): [www.usbreastfeeding.org](http://www.usbreastfeeding.org).

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of: In Colorado: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc. Copies of Colorado network access plans are available on request from member services or can be obtained by going to [anthem.com/co/networkaccess](http://anthem.com/co/networkaccess). In Connecticut: Anthem Health Plans, Inc. In Georgia: Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthcare Plan of Georgia, Inc. In Indiana: Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. In Kentucky: Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky, Inc. In Maine: Anthem Health Plans of Maine, Inc. In Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area): RightCHOICE® Managed Care, Inc. (RIT), Healthy Alliance® Life Insurance Company (HALIC), and HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates administer non-HMO benefits underwritten by HALIC and HMO benefits underwritten by HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates only provide administrative services for self-funded plans and do not underwrite benefits. In Nevada: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc., dba HMO Nevada. In New Hampshire: Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. HMO plans are administered by Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. and underwritten by Matthew Thornton Health Plan, Inc. In Ohio: Community Insurance Company. In Virginia: Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc. trades as Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Virginia, and its service area is all of Virginia except for the City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the area east of State Route 123. In Wisconsin: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wisconsin (BCBSWI), underwrites or administers PPO and indemnity policies and underwrites the out of network benefits in POS policies offered by CompCare Health Services Insurance Corporation (CompCare) or Wisconsin Collaborative Insurance Corporation (WCIC). CompCare underwrites or administers HMO or POS policies; WCIC underwrites or administers Well Priority HMO or POS policies. Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.



### To help your body make enough milk:<sup>3</sup>

- Nurse your baby at least every two to three hours. Nurse more often if your baby wants.
- Let your baby nurse as long as he or she wants to.
- Until breastfeeding is going well, try not to give your baby a pacifier.
- Try not to give your baby formula. The more your baby nurses from you, the more milk your body will make. Do not give your baby any water, juice, milk or food until he or she is six months old, unless the baby's doctor tells you to.<sup>2</sup>

### Working moms and breastfeeding<sup>4</sup>

You may have concerns about nursing and going back to work. Most employers are happy to give you the support you need. Meeting your breastfeeding needs helps them as well.

- Employees who breastfeed are less likely to miss work to take care of a sick baby, because the baby doesn't get sick as often.
- Health care costs are lower since both mother and baby are healthier.
- Employees who get support for breastfeeding are happier and do better work.

### Your rights in the workplace<sup>5</sup>

Federal law protects your right to pump milk for your baby during the workday. Employers with more than 50 employees have to give unpaid break time to pump as needed, for the first year after birth. Also, they must give you a place to pump, other than a bathroom. To learn more, go to the United States Breastfeeding Committee website at [usbreastfeeding.org/workplace-law](http://usbreastfeeding.org/workplace-law).

This information is meant to be educational. It should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please talk to your doctor about changes that may affect your health.

