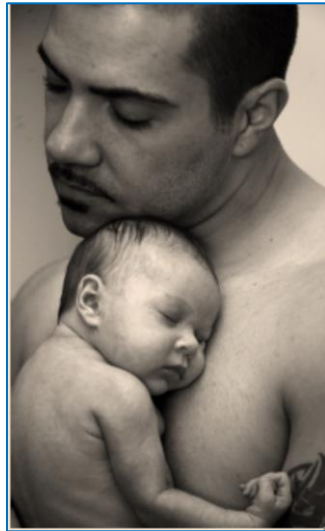


# Dads, Partners and Breastfeeding

Baby and mom can feel calmer and happier when dad is part of the feeding team.

Dad can offer practical and emotional support for breastfeeding in many ways other than feeding.



Here are some tips from dads and partners:

## Be Caring

- Hold and cuddle baby on your chest, skin-to-skin, with baby's ear over your heartbeat.
- Talk, read and sing to your baby; it is magic for their growth.
- Speak up for mom's wishes. Limit visitors when mom and baby are learning to breastfeed.
- Small thoughtful acts can make you a big hero. Ask what she needs or bring her a pillow for comfort. Let mom know you are proud of her.
- When baby is not at the breast, change diapers and carry your baby while mom gets some sleep.

## Be Prepared

- Before you leave the hospital have the Lactation Consultant show you what it looks like when your baby latches on and feeds correctly.
- Newborns eat at least 10 times a day and sleep only a few hours at a time. This helps mom's body make the milk your baby needs.
- Watch baby for early signs of hunger (turning toward the breast, sucking on a fist or making sucking noises) and bring baby to mom to breastfeed. It's much easier for babies to latch on and feed before they get too hungry.
- New moms need extra nutrition and fluids for healthy recovery and making milk. Have water and healthy snacks that are ready-to-eat with one hand nearby when mom breastfeeds.

### Tip

If mom participates in WIC you can join her WIC visits to talk with nutrition and breast feeding specialists for free.



## Be Helpful

- **Be aware of mom's needs.** New moms are tired and may have mood swings because of hormonal changes. Encourage her to rest, take naps, or get some fresh air.
- **Be ready to listen.** When mom is breastfeeding, she is going to have problems you can't solve. All moms say that a patient listener is what they need to get through the hard times.
- **Ask family or friends for help** with meals or care for older children, especially when you can't be there.
- **Find breastfeeding help if she has problems.** Your doctor, health plan or WIC program can help you.

### Some ways to let her know that she's not alone and you are here to help:

- "Can I watch the baby while you get some rest or go see your friends?"
- "How can I help? I can take on more around the house like making meals, cleaning, or going grocery shopping."
- "I am here for you no matter what. Let's spend some alone time together, just you and me."

## Do you notice that she...?

- Has trouble sleeping?
- Is stressed with day-to-day tasks?
- Feels sad, angry or cries a lot?

## Do you...?

- Get concerned she cannot care for herself or the baby?
- Think she might hurt herself or the baby?

You may be the first to see signs of depression and anxiety in your loved one while she is pregnant or after she has had the baby.

Learn the signs and if you do see them, urge her to talk with her doctor.



*"Breastfeeding was hard for her in the beginning and I felt helpless! I was her first line of defense, but no one prepared me to help. Now I understand how it works, what to do and how to get help."*

-First time dad, Age 30

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**Ask your doctor or WIC program about how you can help your loved ones breastfeed and get support when needed.** You can learn more at [ACBreastfeeds.org](http://ACBreastfeeds.org)