

My Prenatal Breastfeeding Checklist

Let's get breastfeeding off to the best start possible! For most moms and babies breastfeeding is simple and joyful. Being prepared will help. Use this chart to look at your pregnancy care and things that your health care provider should be doing or talking about. Talk to your health care provider about your health and breastfeeding. Don't be shy to ask questions. This is your health and your baby's health! If needed, you can see a lactation consultant prenatally to develop a plan for when your baby arrives. The sooner any issues are dealt with the more successful you will be at meeting your breastfeeding goals.

Check in about	Is there an issue? Questions to ask	No issue	Might be an issue	Likely to be an issue	Let's Make a Plan
1) My medical history and medications.	Anything in my history that may point to a future breastfeeding issue? Are my meds safe for breastfeeding?				
2) My prior breastfeeding experience.	If applicable – were there any issues last time? Are they likely to be an issue this time?				
3) My physical exam.	Are my breasts healthy? Are there signs that they have changed in the first trimester to prepare for breastfeeding? Are my nipples everted? Do they stay that way when my areola is compressed?				
4) My blood tests.	Are the results normal? Any results that could impact breastfeeding?				
5) My baby's birth.	What can we do during and after my birth to ensure breastfeeding gets off to a good start? Am I having a caesarean? Will we be skin to skin? Can we delay interventions to keep mom and baby together?				
6) My breastfeeding goals and expectations.	What is normal for the first day? Second day? What can I expect? How do I know my baby is getting enough milk?				
7) My ability to express colostrum	How do I express colostrum? When might I need to? Will I need to prenatally?				
7) My plan for being well supported after the baby arrives.	What support is out there? How can I get more support from family and friends?				

Resources and References

Bloom Breastfeeding Center is committed to helping you achieve your breastfeeding goals. Whether you are breastfeeding for your health, your baby's health, for the ease of it, the cost savings, for the environmental benefits or for the pure joy of it - we are here to help!

Things that could impact breastfeeding success: Review this protocol created by the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine to see what some potential issues that may impact breastfeeding might be. http://www.bfmed.org/Media/Files/Protocols/protocol_2goinghome_revised07.pdf

Medications and Herbals: To see which medications are safe for breastfeeding check out LactMed (can be searched using toxnet <http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/sis/htmlgen?LACT>) or the Infant Risk Center and the work of Dr Thomas Hale www.infantrisk.com. If you have been told that a medication is not safe while breastfeeding, we recommend that you double check using one of these sources.

Physical Exam: All women should have a physical exam that includes a breast exam. Some variations in breast and nipple shape and size can impact breastfeeding. <http://www.internationalbreastfeedingjournal.com/content/4/1/13> Breast or nipple surgery can impact breastfeeding. www.bfar.org

Blood Tests: Health conditions that may impact breastfeeding that can show up in blood tests are low thyroid, very low hemoglobin and low B12. As can abnormal hormone levels associated with PCOS and gestational diabetes. Check out <http://www.lowmilksupply.org/overview.shtml> and the book "The Breastfeeding Mother's Guide to Making More Milk" by Diana West and Lisa Marasco (McGraw-Hill, December, 2008). We love this book and their website and we highly recommend them.

Expressing Colostrum and Hands On Pumping: All pregnant benefit from knowing how to express colostrum. To learn how ask your careprovider and visit <http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/MaxProduction.html> Some women might need to express colostrum prenatally. To learn more please visit our FAQs and Resources.

10 Valuable Tips for Breastfeeding Success - More info on breastfeeding and infant nutrition by the Public Health Agency of Canada: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/nutrition/tips-cons-eng.php

For more information and resources please visit us at www.bloombreastfeeding.com

