



Western Upper Peninsula
Health Department

BREASTFEEDING

The quarterly newsletter for breastfeeding information



ALL ABOUT CLUSTER FEEDING

What is cluster feeding?

Here is some helpful need-to-know information to tuck away for when your baby starts to cluster feed.

Cluster feeding: *What is it?*

Cluster feeding is a normal baby behavior when babies start wanting to breastfeed much more frequently (in clusters) over the span of a couple hours. It is usually seen in breastfeeding newborns during the first few weeks of life and often times in the evening.

How to identify cluster feeding:

Your baby might be cluster feeding if:

- They're showing their usual hunger signs more frequently and eating for shorter periods of time.
- They still have their normal wet and dirty diapers.
- Nothing else seems wrong and they're content while eating.

If your older infant is cluster feeding, this can be a sign of a growth spurt and/or teething.

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Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person

Colic VS Cluster Feeding:

Colic is similar to cluster feeding because it can come on suddenly and may seem at first like your baby is just hungry. The difference is that a baby with colic usually cannot be soothed by breastfeeding alone. Whereas a baby that is cluster feeding would normally be happy and content once he or she begins to eat.

A few things that can identify colic are:

- Crying that sounds more like screaming.
- Crying at a predictable time each day.
- Your baby's face and body seem tense.
- Baby is not soothed by breastfeeding.



How to make it easier:

Now that we've talked about what cluster feeding is and how to identify it, we can talk about how to deal with it. As you will soon find out cluster feeding can be exhausting for moms. Here are some tips to help make it easier on you!

- Keep snacks and water near you while breastfeeding, this will help you stay nourished and hydrated.
- Have something relaxing set up for you to do while your baby nurses, such as your favorite tv show, a podcast on your phone, a book, etc.
- Practice nursing your baby while they're in a baby carrier so if you want/need to move around while they nurse, you can.
- Talk to your partner about expectations for when baby starts to cluster feed; Example: How they can help make you more comfortable, what will need to be done that you can't do while feeding, etc.
- Change breastfeeding positions often so you don't get sore.

Above all - get comfortable, be patient, and ask for help if you need it!
You're going to do great and you will get through it!

Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person