



Western Upper Peninsula Health Department **BREASTFEEDING**

The quarterly newsletter for breastfeeding information



BREASTFEEDING IS A JOURNEY

That journey doesn't have to end in the hospital.

When knowing the benefits of breastfeeding, it tends to be a natural response to decide to breastfeed. You hear about the amazing nutritional value and the ease of being able to quite literally do it anywhere without any supplies.

Breastfeeding is great, but it might not always come easy.

One of the most common things we hear from new parents is that breastfeeding didn't go well in the hospital and the parents decided to formula feed. Even our social norms tend to lean towards formula feeding being the easy answer. Although formula feeding might be a simple solution, it isn't the most optimal way to meet yours and your baby's needs.

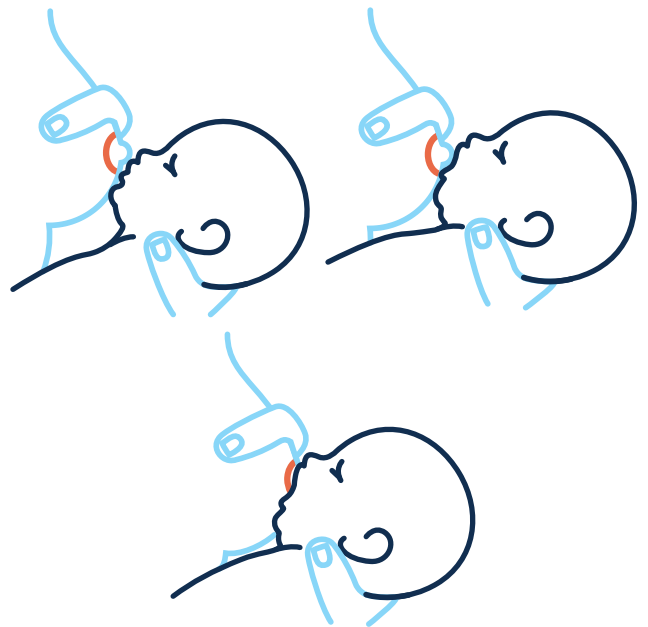


Breastfeeding takes work. I'm sure that's not what anyone wants to hear right after giving birth, but it's the truth. Much like anything else you're new to learning, it will take time to learn. It's not only you learning, your baby is learning too. Thankfully the human body is complex and babies have an innate ability to begin breastfeeding almost immediately upon being laid on your chest.

How do we get breastfeeding off to a good start?

You can start by participating in what we like to call the "Golden Hour." This the hour right after birth that you spend with your baby. During this time try to limit visitors and relax with your baby. The best way to use this time is practice skin to skin with your newborn. (Remove any clothing between you and your baby and simply lay baby on your chest). This gives you time to bond with your baby and is something you can do long after leaving the hospital. By doing skin to skin, this allows your baby the chance to start exploring and find your breast. This is a time where baby might attempt to latch on and begin breastfeeding. Establishing a good latch is key in a successful breastfeeding journey. A shallow latch is often what causes mothers pain which can lead to the end of breastfeeding.

After latch is established it's important to keep nursing the baby on demand. The more you both work at it, the more experience you will have, and the more smoothly things will go.



As depicted above, it shows baby being brought to the nipple, baby's mouth opening wide, and latching by coming up over the nipple and areola.

Sometimes it doesn't work right away.

Everybody is different. Some moms might encounter issues other moms never had.

The most important thing when encountering difficulties is *not to give up*.

If you're having issues that are causing breastfeeding not to work, we want to help you. Breastfeeding is a process that takes time and formula doesn't have to be the answer. If running into complications, you can reach out to your local Health Department to speak with a breastfeeding peer counselor, or a lactation consultant. Together we can troubleshoot issues and work at getting you on successful breastfeeding journey.

We are here to support you!

Few new parents are breastfeeding confidently by the time they leave the hospital. Before giving up, reach out. We are here to help you and want to see you succeed in whatever breastfeeding goals you may have.

*Always remember you can ask for help by contacting your local WIC agency or breastfeeding peer support person
This institution is an equal opportunity provider*