



# Module 2

## Supporting Breastfeeding: A Partner's Guide



# Basics of milk production

At the end of pregnancy, the baby starts to store brown fat for a reason. Throughout pregnancy, a woman's body produces **prolactin**, a milk-producing hormone, but it's only after birth that this hormone fully activates.

**Early breastfeeding helps stimulate prolactin and increases milk production over time.**

About 72 hours postpartum, prolactin levels spike, especially at night, leading to more frequent feeding. This natural pattern enhances milk production, akin to our ancestors who found nighttime the safest period for feeding.

Breast milk production is a **supply-and-demand process**. The more the baby feeds, the more milk is produced. The breasts are continuously making milk, much like a river that flows regardless of how much water is taken out.

In the first few days at home, it's crucial to maintain a supportive environment, as hospital routines and external advice can disrupt the natural hormonal balance essential for successful breastfeeding.

**By staying connected and supportive, you can help create a calm, nurturing space that supports her breastfeeding journey.**

In essence, your involvement and understanding can make a significant difference in how smoothly breastfeeding begins and continues. Being present and supportive helps ensure that both mother and baby have the best start possible.

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If your child is to thrive and grow, they will likely rely on her milk, which is what breasts are fundamentally for.

**Breastfeeding is a choice she makes about her body, and your role is crucial in supporting that decision.**

Your support not only aids her but strengthens the bond between you, positively influencing the many decisions that come with parenting.

Successful breastfeeding requires oxytocin to release milk from the breast. It is stimulated through skin-to-skin contact with the baby. Oxytocin is also known as the hormone of love, labour and lactation.

To provide the support she needs, understanding the basics of milk production is key.

Remember, we are mammals, and mammals have nourished their young with milk for millions of years.

Breast milk provides **vital immune protection** and has been crucial in our evolutionary success.

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- A mother/parent will feed their baby **at least 8-12 times in a 24-hour period**, including overnight.
- Acting as a partner, when it comes to all household tasks, will allow your partner to focus on feeding your baby. As long and as often as needed.
- It's important for the mother/parent and baby to stay together as much as possible.
- Pain during feeding is not normal. If this happens, seek support from our Camden Baby Feeding Team – 07808 891260 or email [camden.babyfeedingteam@nhs.net](mailto:camden.babyfeedingteam@nhs.net).
- Encourage and support your partner to **eat and stay hydrated** regularly.
- Help your partner relax—offering a massage can be a great way to assist.
- For instant support and advice, Camden residents have access to the **Anya App**. Anya Health is a FREE app available to families in Camden, offering support for you and your little ones.

# Bottle Feeding

Introducing bottles can interrupt breastfeeding and may lead to breastfeeding ending prematurely. However, if you need to give your baby a bottle and want to protect your milk supply, it is advised to express your breastmilk. The use of artificial formula is relatively recent (100 years), and it's not without risks. It changes an infant's gut and immune system, making them more susceptible to infections compared to breastfed babies, whose immune systems are bolstered by breast milk. However, if breastmilk is not available it is important to follow the guidelines on preparing formula milk and sterilising equipment. Your baby only needs the First milk – Stage 1 up to the first year. All brands have the same ingredients. After 12 months of age you can give your baby cow's milk. For information on formula milks and how to make up a feed go to - [Infant Milks — First Steps Nutrition Trust](#)

## Responsive Bottle Feeding

- ✓ Feed baby when they display feeding cues
- ✓ Limit the number of people who feed baby
- ✓ Hold baby close and upright, enabling eye contact
- ✓ Pace the bottle feeds to allow baby to pause and breathe
- ✓ Don't try and coax the baby to take more milk than they need from the bottle