

Newborn Feeding Preference

Feeding times are cherished moments between you and your baby. In addition to the nutritional benefits, it's a time for you and your baby to bond. **The decision about how to feed your new baby is one of the first and most important decisions you will make for your baby's health.** You may choose to feed your baby by only breastfeeding, only bottle-feeding, or using a combination of the two.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the healthiest choice for your baby. Babies who are breastfed have a lower risk of respiratory illnesses, ear infections, obesity, and diabetes. If you choose to only breastfeed, keep in mind that:

- Newborns should be fed whenever they are hungry.
- No formula, water, or pacifiers are offered unless recommended by your healthcare provider.
- Rooming in is encouraged 24 hours a day unless your healthcare provider recommends otherwise.
- Mothers are taught how to breastfeed and maintain lactation even if a medical need for separation occurs.
- A caregiver will tell you about breastfeeding benefits and available educational resources. Lactation consultants are also available to help.

Bottle-feeding

If you choose to bottle-feed your baby with mother's milk or formula:

- Feed your baby in your arms and never prop the bottle.
- Consider skin-to-skin care as a way to bond with your baby. Skin-to-skin contact calms and soothes your baby and improves your baby's sleep. It also helps your baby maintain a healthy body temperature and regulates heart rate, blood sugar, and breathing.

Ask your care team for a copy of the Intermountain Healthcare fact sheet **[Skin-to-Skin Care for Your Newborn](#)** for more information.



What do I need to do next?

- 1 Read the information provided in this fact sheet.
- 2 Choose the best feeding option for you and your baby.
- 3 Ask Intermountain Healthcare nursing staff or lactation consultants about any questions you may have.

Breastfeeding and Bottle-feeding

If you choose to breastfeed and bottle-feed (using either mother's milk or formula), **be aware that using formula can lead to a decrease in your breastmilk supply and can make breastfeeding more difficult.** If you choose to give formula while breastfeeding:

- Always put your baby to breast first before giving your baby a bottle.
- The more you breastfeed or pump, the more milk your body will make. If your baby is not breastfeeding every 2 to 3 hours, your nurse can provide you with a breast pump.
- We encourage you to exclusively breastfeed while in the hospital to help establish your milk supply.
- You can introduce your baby to a bottle when they are 2 to 4 weeks old if breastfeeding has been going well.
- Most babies can switch back and forth from the breast to a bottle without problems once breastfeeding is well established.



Questions for my caregivers

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