

# Breastfeeding Goals: Long-and Short-Term

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies receive only breastmilk during the first six months of life, and then a combination of breastmilk and solid foods the second six months of life.



## Beyond the first year: small goals, big benefits

Breastmilk remains immunologically and emotionally beneficial after one year for as long as it is mutually desired.

A long-term goal to breastfeed for a year or more could feel daunting. Setting a short-term feeding goal can help keep things in perspective, help celebrate small wins, and feel more attainable.

The first two weeks following delivery can be the most challenging time for breastfeeding mothers. You and your baby are learning each other's patterns and routines.

*With time, practice, and coaching, things will get easier!*

### Before your baby arrives:

- **Set short-term breastfeeding goals**, such as “I will breastfeed my baby for two weeks” or “I will breastfeed my baby until my partner returns to work”. Find goals you are comfortable with.
- **Set long-term breastfeeding goals**, such as “I will breastfeed my baby for a year” or “I will breastfeed my baby until I return to work”. Set your goal early, but don't judge your long term plan based on how things are going in the short term.
- Discuss breastfeeding goals with your partner to ensure you both feel comfortable and share how they can support you.
- Look into your available hospital, clinic, and community resources for breastfeeding.
- Include breastfeeding preferences in your birth plan.
- Consider purchasing a breast pump and learn how to set it up before delivery.
- Have a conversation with your employer or human resources to discuss pumping/feeding options.

- Take a breastfeeding class or meet with lactation for an individualized plan.
- Communicate your desires with your childcare if you will be apart from your baby.
- There are few supplies that are a need for breastfeeding, but consider purchasing one or two nursing bras or tanks.

### After delivery:

- Feed your baby right after delivery and often to help establish a healthy milk supply
- Avoid skipping nursing sessions unless medically necessary
- Avoid early pacifier use or bottles until breastfeeding is well established
- Ask for help when needed—this could be from your partner, friends and family, or professional support from a lactation consultant. Early lactation visits can help improve latch, decrease pain, and promote milk volumes.
- Allow others to help you—people will ask how they can help. Be sure to be let them know what you need. Remember: They want to help you, and it is ok to accept their help!
- Limit visitors in the early few weeks after delivery to those that are close to you. You will need time to rest and recover. Try to place start and end times for visitors to help promote your rest.
- Nap each time your baby naps in the early postpartum period (first few weeks).
- Take time to reflect on your goals and celebrate your accomplishments! Once you have met your short-term goals, consider making a new one.
- Avoid comparing yourself to others

*There are no “rules for breastfeeding” but rather guidelines. Each couplet's (mom and baby) journey will be different. Almara wants to celebrate you and help you reach your breastfeeding goals.*