

breastfeeding

information for grandparents



Today we know more about the importance of breastfeeding for mothers and babies.

With a little help from you, your family can have a better breastfeeding experience.

The importance of family support

One of the most supportive things grandparents can do is listen. New parents often have many frustrations and worries to cope with. It's sometimes helpful if you can listen with interest, without giving answers or advice. At first the new mother may spend much of her time feeding and your cooking and cleaning will be a true gift of love - a needed gift that she will always remember. Encourage her to take daytime rest between nursing sessions.

You can help by changing, cuddling, bathing or taking your grandchild out for a walk so you can bond with each other. When she is beginning a feed if you feel uncomfortable offer to make a drink whilst she positions and attaches baby to the breast in private - you will probably be surprised at how discreet breastfeeding can be.

If mum is struggling with breastfeeding, encourage her to get the help and support she needs to make her new role successful. By doing this, you are making a golden investment in your grandchild's future.

Where can I get support?

The NHS national breastfeeding helpline is: 0300 1000 212

NHS North of Tyne - working on behalf of Newcastle and North Tyneside Primary Care Trusts and Northumberland Care Trust



A good start for a healthier life

congratulations!

You're going to be a grandparent

As a new grandparent of a breastfed baby you have just been given a wonderful opportunity. If you are supportive, offer encouragement and praise you will be contributing to a positive breastfeeding experience.

This leaflet will give you the latest information on breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is the natural, healthy way to feed a baby. Breast milk is fast, fresh, free and served at the correct temperature. **Breastfeeding can benefit the whole family, emotionally and economically.**

Advantages of breastfeeding for mum

Breastfeeding is great for mum. It reduces her risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer and also gives her stronger bones in later life. Breastfeeding helps the womb return to its normal size quicker and burns more calories to help mum to regain her pre-pregnancy shape. Breastfeeding helps mum and baby bond and is enjoyable. There is the sense of satisfaction for mum in feeding her baby from her own body.

Advantages of breast milk for baby

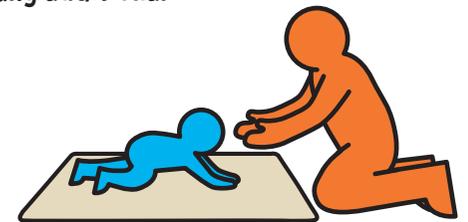
A mother's milk is special: it is nutritionally balanced and tailor made to meet each baby's individual needs. It is easily digested and efficiently used by the baby's body. It's a living fluid and protects your grandchild against infections such as:

- Sickness and diarrhoea
- Chest infections
- Ear infections
- Urine infections

why is breastfeeding so different?

Now you know why breastfeeding is so good for both mother and baby. **Here is why breastfeeding is so different to formula feeding:**

- Breastfeeding is a skill for both mother and baby to learn - don't pressure them; just be there with them and help them as they learn
- Breast milk is supplied as baby requires it - the more a baby needs, the more his mother will supply. It's important they feed whenever they seem hungry; rooting, finger sucking, crying is a last resort. (MORE FEEDING = MORE MILK)
- Introducing bottles and dummies to the baby in the early weeks can make it much more difficult for parents to identify when their baby is hungry
- Breast milk is designed to be absorbed quickly by an infant's intestine. A newborn will nurse 8 - 12 times in 24 hours. This may be hourly at times and often in the early evening. This is normal and it does not mean he is starving, it means he is doing what he's supposed to do
- Feeds don't need to be timed. Let baby feed for as long and as often as they need. Long feeds will not hurt mum's nipples if baby is attached properly
- Breast milk contains all the nutrients a baby needs for the first six months of life. The composition of breast milk changes according to the baby's needs so they don't require any additional fluids/foods



REMEMBER: Be proud that your grandchild is getting the best start in life.