

# Is Baby Getting Enough Breast Milk?

Many new moms wonder if their babies are getting enough breast milk. It's a natural concern since you can't see how much milk your baby is drinking. Watching for a few simple signs, however, can tell you if your baby's getting a healthy amount.

One of the easiest ways is to count how many diapers your baby goes through in a day. Before your milk comes in, which is typically a few days after giving birth, you'll produce colostrum: a healthy, thick substance that nourishes your newborn. During this time, your baby will have about 1 or 2 wet diapers each day.

Once your milk comes in, you can watch your baby's suckle and swallow pattern to see if he's feeding properly. A nursing baby suckles quickly at first, and then slows down as your milk "lets down" or starts to flow more rapidly. As your baby starts to nurse with longer, slower swallows, you'll see his throat drop, similar to a bullfrog, as he swallows. This means he's getting plenty to eat.

*"You'll know if your baby's getting enough breast milk by the number of diapers. So, for the wet diapers, you'll have 6-8 a day and then for stools, 2-5 a day and that's how you know. And also, by just checking their mouth, if the lips are moist, inside the mouth is moist then you know, and if your baby's content."*

Your newborn should be nursing 8 to 12 times a day, typically every 3 hours. And often you can actually hear your baby swallowing: a good sign he's feeding well. After nursing, your breasts should feel softer now that some of the milk has been emptied and your baby should seem calm and satisfied.

Another good sign your baby's feeding well is if he's gaining weight. Your baby will likely lose weight right after birth, but he should start gaining again within a week. Most babies regain their birth weight by 2 weeks of age. And steady weight gain of roughly 4 to 7 ounces per week shows that your baby's getting plenty of nourishment.

Newborn babies do sleep a lot. Sometimes up to 20 hours per day! But when they are awake, they should be alert, not lethargic. If your child's consistently fussy after feedings or has dark yellow urine, those may be signs your baby's not getting enough breast milk.

If you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding, call your baby's health care provider or talk to a lactation consultant. They can help answer your questions and get you on the road to a successful, emotionally bonding breastfeeding experience.