

BREASTFEEDING BLUEPRINT FOR PARENTS



SIMPLIFYING THE BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

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Your Breastfeeding Journey: Making It All About YOU





BREASTFEEDING BLUEPRINT FOR PARENTS

Traditionally, breastfeeding is centered around the newborn, but what if we shifted the focus to meet the mother's needs?

Start your breastfeeding journey with steps that are just right for you. Designed to empower you, this blueprint aims for independence from apps, advice, and even us rather than dependency. By prioritizing you, we bring the baby to the mom, creating a nurturing environment that supports both you and your little one's growth and well-being.

It's YOUR journey!

What does that mean? YOU get to decide if you want to exclusively breastfeed by direct breastfeeding or just pumping breastmilk giving it in a bottle feeding, a combination of direct breastfeeding and pumped breastmilk in bottle, breastfeeding and supplementing with donor milk or formula, or even just giving formula (Yes even this!). YOU have choices!

You also have TIME!

Breastfeeding takes six weeks to achieve and more importantly allows you to discover YOUR choice of feeding your baby. We are giving you the most critical period: The FIRST WEEK! The first week creates the foundation for the journey. By empowering your journey with concrete tools, we want you to become confident and empowered in your motherhood.

Thank you for welcoming us into your journey. Please reach out with any questions and concerns

*With Best Wishes,
Dr. Sonal Patel*



REST IS PART OF RECOVERY,
REST IS NOT EARNED.



PROCESS

01

STEP ONE

IDENTIFY YOUR BREASTFEEDING GOALS

02

STEP TWO

UNDERSTANDING PROLACTIN, SLEEP, & YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

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STEP THREE

THE LATCHES

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STEP FOUR

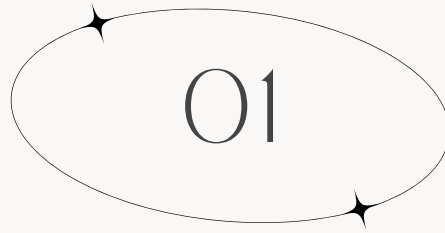
DEFINING "SUCCESS"/QUALITY BREASTFEEDING

05

STEP FIVE

LEAN BACK & COMMON PITFALLS





STEP ONE



01IDENTIFY YOUR BREASTFEEDING
GOALS; THE SIX WEEK PROCESS

Breastfeeding is a journey in which you learn about yourself, your body, your baby and your parenting style. And just like any journey, there are bumps, breakthroughs, peaks, and valleys that force you to reevaluate your goals... and this is **normal**. It takes SIX weeks to master YOUR breastfeeding journey— that means you have time so **breathe**!

Use the **SMART** system of goal setting to help you.

Specific: What do I want to accomplish?

Measurable: How will I know when its accomplished?

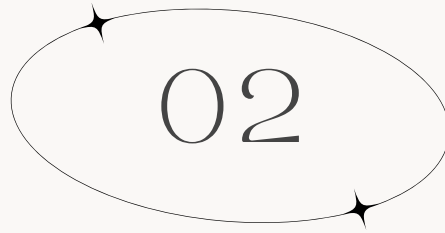
Achievable: How can this goal be accomplished?

Relevant: Does this seem worthwhile?

Time: When can I accomplish this goal?

We have filled out the **FIRST WEEK** Foundation!





STEP TWO



02

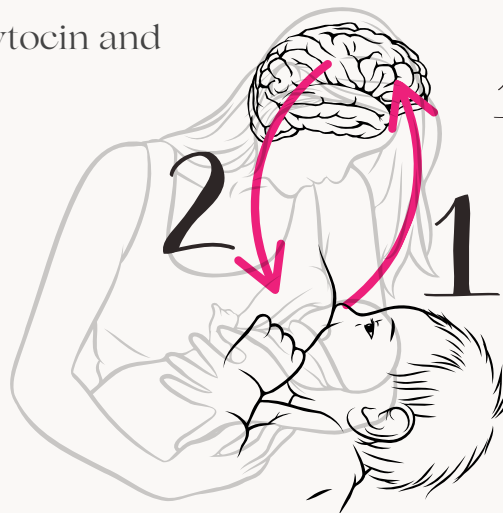
UNDERSTANDING PROLACTIN, SLEEP, & YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

For your body to make breastmilk, there are two hormones that are key: oxytocin and prolactin. **Oxytocin** releases the milk for the milk ducts. **Prolactin** makes the milk. In order to activate breastmilk production, you have to stimulate your breast by direct breastfeeding or by pumping.

2 Brain releases oxytocin and prolactin.

Oxytocin makes the muscles around the milk glands to contract, causing a “let down”.

Prolactin promotes the milk production.



1 Baby nursing gives the signal to the brain to “make more milk”.

Fun Fact:

Oxytocin also contracts the uterus helping the uterus to go back to normal. That is why especially in the first week you can have cramps like a period. But if the cramps get more severe, then notify your OB/GYN or midwife.



Prolactin follows a circadian rhythm, which means its levels in the body fluctuate throughout the day and night. Here's how this rhythm works:

1. Peak Levels:

- Prolactin levels are generally higher at night. This increase is linked for increase milk production, as nighttime feedings are common. The peak usually occurs during sleep, especially in the early morning hours.

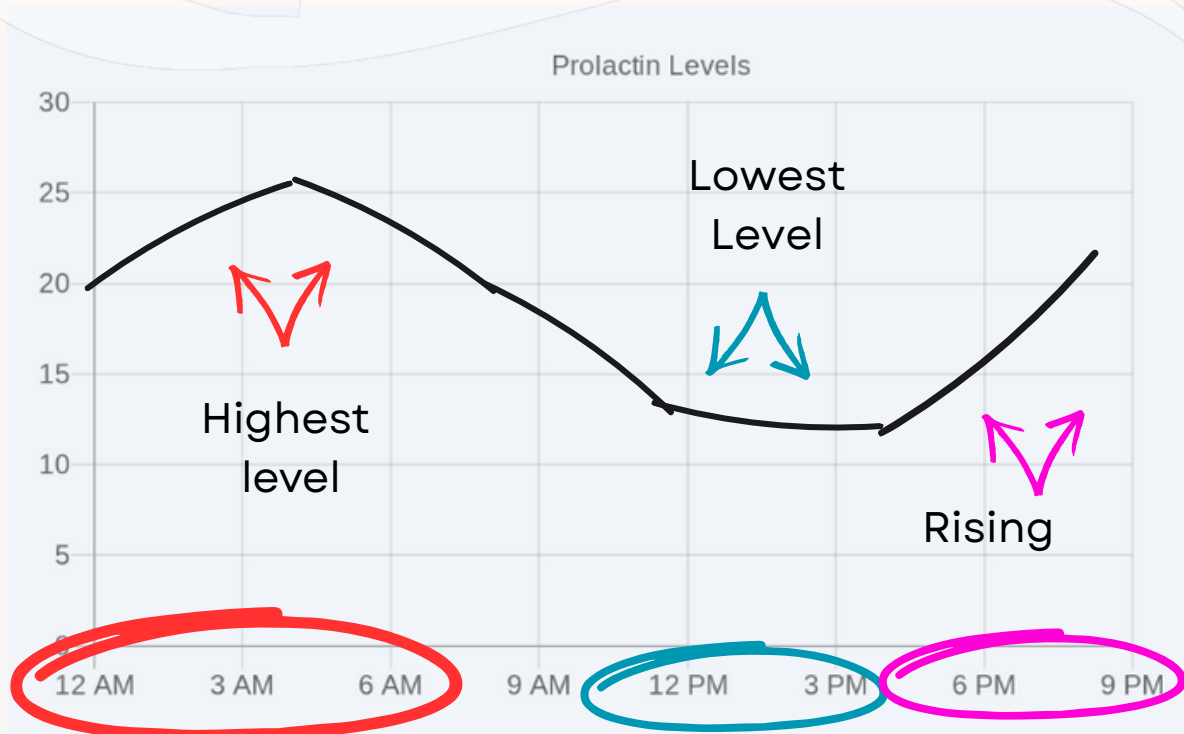
2. Diurnal Variation:

- During the day, prolactin levels typically decrease. The hormone's levels are lower in the late morning and afternoon, reflecting the body's natural rhythm.

3. Influence of Sleep:

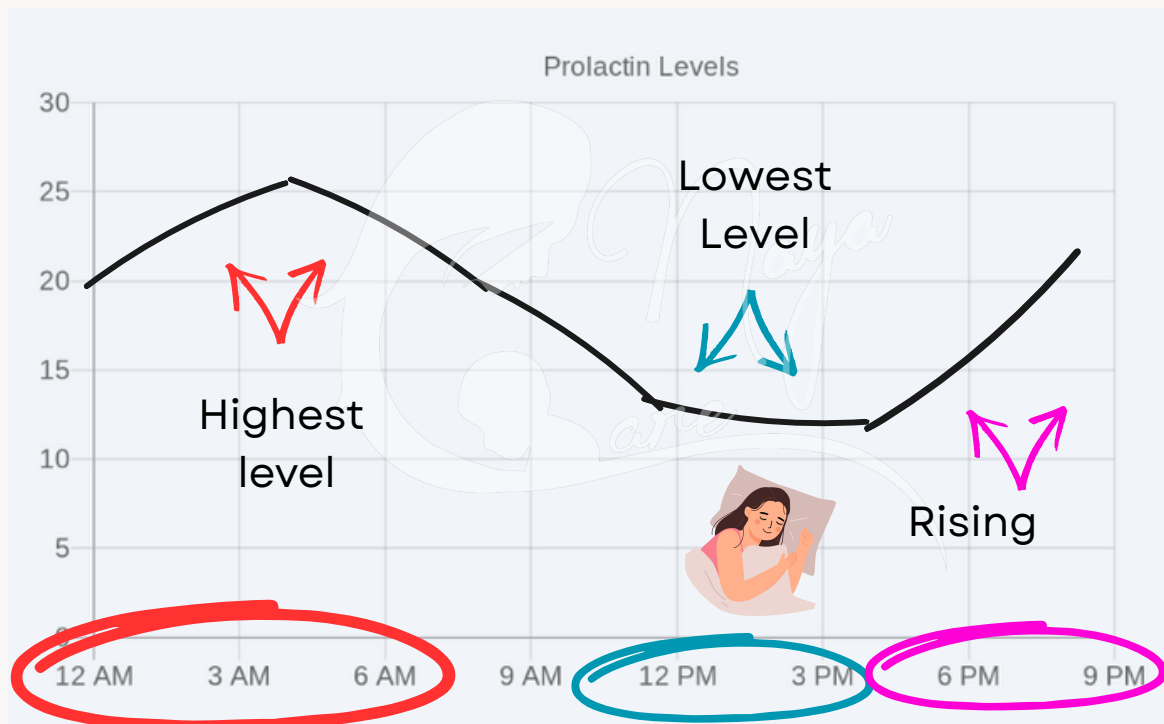
- Sleep itself stimulates the production of prolactin. The deeper stages of sleep, particularly non-REM sleep, are associated with increased prolactin secretion. **Sleep protects from mental health issues such as postpartum depression and anxiety.**

This circadian rhythm allows prolactin to effectively manage the body's needs for milk production and other functions during both day and night cycles, adapting to the natural demands of breastfeeding and maternal care.

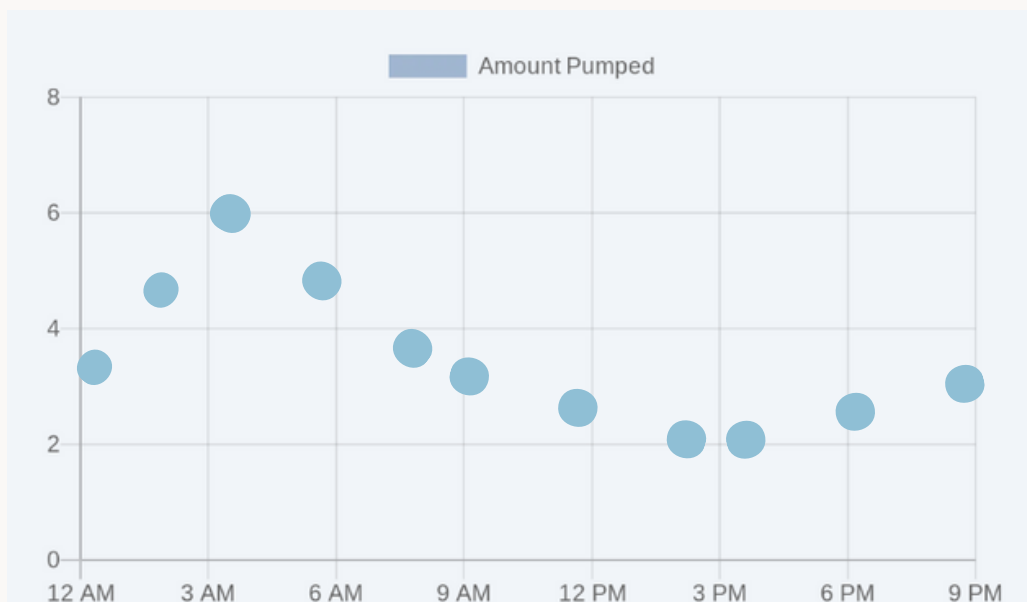


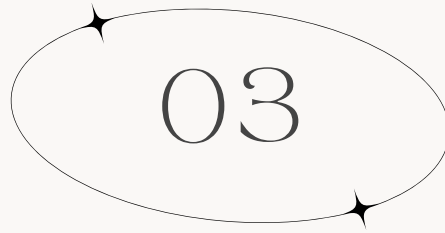
So what do I with this information?

The **biggest mistake** is to skip the night time feedings in the first week. These are key in establishing breastmilk production. Instead, lean in to your body's hormone and protect your afternoon nap for the first two weeks! Breastfeed and then go for a nap! Also, if you can, sleep in a separate room from your newborn. Allow someone else (father, partner, grandparents, friend) to take care of the newborn while you sleep. Note: You should also sleep at night when you can but a lot of cluster feeding happens at night.



Fun Fact: Fluctuating of prolactin levels is why you pump different amounts of milk in a day.





STEP THREE



So many ways, so many options! What to do???

Key is what works best for you at the time! **Each latch has a place in healing and recovery.** Think of it as different style for different occasions, so make it your own!

Regardless of the style (i.e. latch) couple of things need to be in place to avoid the dread nipple trauma. And **breastfeeding ALLOWS you TIME**—three full days in fact, that's 72 hours to get this initial step down! Take your time and get help with a lactation consultant to ensure the latch is proper!

Key Components of a Latch!



An effective latch involves:

- ★ The baby's mouth covering more of the areola beneath the nipple than above.
- ★ Lips flanged outward.
- ★ Baby's chin touching the breast.



Cross-Cradle



- This is ideal for newborns or small babies.
- The mother supports the baby's head with the opposite hand from the breast being used.
- The baby's body is across the front of the mother, with their tummy facing hers.

Cradle

- Common and natural way to hold the baby.
- The baby's head rests on the crook of the mother's arm on the same side as the breast being used.
- The mother's other hand can support the baby's bottom.



Football

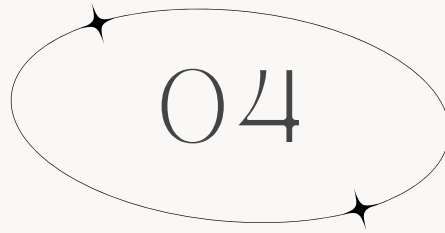


- Useful for mothers with larger breasts, or if the mother had a C-section.
- The baby is tucked under the mother's arm like a football on the same side as the breast being used.
- The mother supports the baby's head with her hand.

Side-lying

- Great for night feeding or for mothers recovering from a C-section.
- Both the mother and baby lay on their sides face-to-face.
- The mother uses the lower arm to support the baby and guide them to the breast.





STEP FOUR



04

DEFINING QUALITY BREASTFEEDING.& SCORING

We focus on **QUALITY** not quantity of breastfeeding because we need to balance a mothers' physical and mental health with baby's development and growth. Viewing breastfeeding as a form of parenting and teaching yourself and your baby a skill. The most important **Quantity** indicator is not if your baby nursed for 20 minutes but if your baby is ready for the next feed.

QUALITY OF BREASTFEEDING SESSION

1. Strong and Proper Latch
2. Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern
3. Strong Coordinated Suck
4. Audible Swallow Heard
5. Breastfeed for 10-20 minutes
6. Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after said feed



Each feeding session (breast or bottle) is assessed and scored. When breastfeeding followed by bottle feeding, score the breastfeeding portion. Based on the total score in a 24 hour period, goals are created for the next 24 hour period.

Quality Score of Individual Feeding Session	Description of Feeds
1	☒ Proper Latch ☒ Strong Coordinated Sucks ☒ Audible Swallow Heard ☒ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern Consistent ☒ Able to Breastfeed > 20 minutes ☒ Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after the said feed
2	☒ Proper Latch ☒ Strong Coordinated Sucks ☒ Audible Swallowing Heard ☒ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern Recognized but Inconsistent ☒ Able to Breastfeed 10-20 minutes but gets tired ☒ Alert for next feed 2-4 hours after the said feed
3	☒ Proper Latch ☒ Coordinated Sucks Present ☒ Difficulty Swallowing ☒ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern not present and needs pacing ☒ Able to Breastfeed for 5-10 minutes ☒ Fatigues During Said Feed
4	☒ Proper Latch ☒ Inconsistent Suck ☒ Difficulty Swallowing ☒ Suck-Swallow-Pause Pattern not present and requires breaks ☒ Able to Breastfeed for < 5 minutes ☒ Fatigues during said feed

*Adapted from Ludwig and Waltzman



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*Adapted from Ludwig and Waltzman

Take a ways!

Keep going! You both are doing great!

What's the rush: spacing, burping and slowing down will help.

Lactation Consult to fine tune and/or support with bottle feeding.

Your baby is not quite developmentally ready. Bottle feed, clinician, and lactation consult.

Fun Fact: Paced Bottle Feeding

We evaluate bottle feeding as well to make sure the baby is appropriately coordinating the feed. Also, when bottle feeding a breastfed baby we have to do PACED bottle feeding. Here is a link to a video explaining how and why! [Paced Bottle Feeding.](#)





STEP FIVE



05

LEAN BACK & COMMON PITFALLS

Breastfeeding is the first step in your parenting. Breastfeeding (regardless of how long) is the first skill you are not only teaching your newborn but more importantly learning for yourself how you teach i.e. parent. Your breastfeeding journey is small compared to parenting so change your mindset of the goal from “I have to breastfeed” to “I get to experience my parenting.”

Common Pitfalls in the First 2 Weeks:

1. Breastfeeding Hump
2. Not trusting the process.
3. Planning on storage of milk for later, from day one!
4. Dividing the night.
5. Not trusting yourself.



Breastfeeding Hump

A breastfeeding hump is a hump that develops on woman's neck due to constant hunching over with nursing. It causes back and pelvic pain and stress. Easy solution: LEAN BACK! Leaning back **promotes a deeper latch** and avoids the breastfeeding hump. Also, leaning back relaxes your body and decreases cortisol that can affect supply.

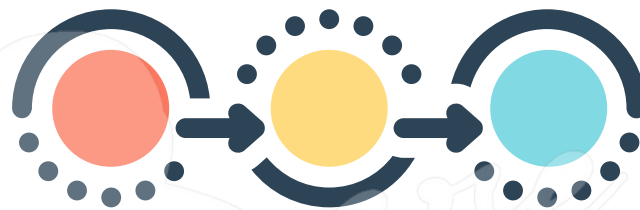


You can definitely start with leaning forward to help with the latch. But once your baby has latched on and established on the breast, please lean back!



Not Trusting the Process

Woman new to breastfeeding have been told to often that it “natural” and they should be able to just get it..or you have failed. But, like anything in life, there is a process. Just as you have to bring the egg and sperm together to create organs to form into a newborn. There is a process to achieving “natural” breastfeeding. You have to establish the first weeks foundation in order to build on progress. Breastfeeding takes SIX weeks to allow YOU to experience it all.

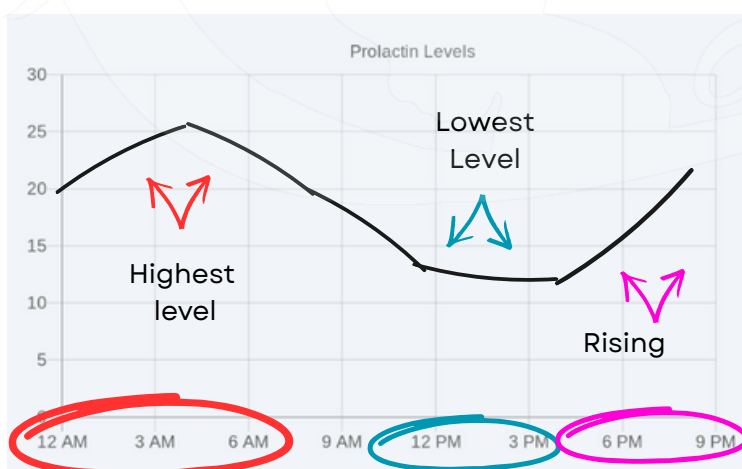


Planning on storage of milk for later

This thought is very common so you aren't alone. But if the goal is to give your baby your breastmilk then pumping for "later" seems futile. Also there will be opportunity through growth spurts occurring after the first week to allow for storage.



Dividing the night



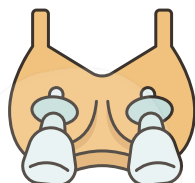
How hard you try, biologically, prolactin will not allow you. You will be forced to wake up due to engorged, leaky breast. Also, you will see a drop in milk supply. Instead, protect your afternoon naps and lean into the biological way to ensure establishment of breastfeeding.



Not trusting yourself



This has become a you problem, because “we” (society, families, partners, coming from a bottle culture) have caused you to doubt every step. The most common question asked is “how do we/I know my baby is getting enough, because we/I cannot measure it”. There are two objective ways to know if your baby is getting enough: daily and weekly. Daily: diaper counts with peep and change of color of poop from dark, tarry black to yellow seeding in 5-6 days. Weekly: growth of weight, length, and height. Rely on these objective measures to assure you and drown out the noise.



Bonus Items: History of Breastfeeding

All babies are not apt to breastfeeding just like all mothers do not produce adequate milk. In our current society, we put all the onus on mothers. But if you looked at breastfeeding history in society and literature, you learn that we domesticated animals for their milk, we had wet nurses to help mothers, and we milked shared now called donor milk. Therefore, please don't be hard on yourself. Sometimes starting the journey is enough. And with the right support and guidance, YOU can achieve YOUR goals!







QUIZ TIME!

1. Whose Breastfeeding Journey is this?
 - a. Father (with his useless boobs)
 - b. Neighbors (with their nosy, useless nose)
 - c. Mine, and only mine.
2. How many weeks does it take to go through this journey?
 - a. 1 day (I should know it immediately)
 - b. Forever (feels like it)
 - c. 6 weeks because my body, my mind, and my newborn are all changing, learning, and developing.
3. What latch position do I use?
 - a. I already forgot.
 - b. The one that supports my healing in that moment and session.
4. Who am I going to share this information with and my breastfeeding desires?
 - a. Everyone
 - b. The father with the useless boobs, the neighbor with the useless nosy nose, my friends, my support system.
 - c. My clinicians.
5. Who is going to be an amazing mom despite my journey?
 - a. ME
 - b. ME
 - c. ME
 - d. oh, and ME







 Welcome
queen

trust your
JOURNEY





MY GOALS: PRE BABY

S

SPECIFIC

WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

- ☐ I only want to breastfeed exclusively.
- ☐ I want to combine my breastfeeding with bottle feeding.
- ☐ I want to combine my breastfeeding with pumping.
- ☐ I want to give my baby breastmilk but only pump.
- ☐ I only want breastmilk (either mine or donor) for my baby.
- ☐ I want to breastfeed, pump, give my milk, donor milk or formula feed.
- ☐ I want formula feed only.
- ☐ Other: _____

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?

- ☐ When I see my milk.
- ☐ When I hear it from a professional.
- ☐ When I hear it from my trusted person.
- ☐ I will believe in my abilities and try to enjoy the process.
- ☐ When I see my baby suckle.
- ☐ Other: _____

A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?

- ☐ I will learn everything that I need to know about breastfeeding.
- ☐ I will download all the apps.
- ☐ I will take a few classes.
- ☐ I will know the basics of breastfeeding and try to enjoy it.
- ☐ I will tell my support system about my desires to breastfeed.
- ☐ I will understand that this is a six week process and I have time.
- ☐ I will make sure my main support person also has basic breastfeeding education.
- ☐ I will preemptively hire a lactation specialist to come to my home after delivery.
- ☐ I will put the cost of a lactation specialist on my baby shower gift list.
- ☐ Other: _____

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No



T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?

- ☐ When the baby comes.
- ☐ I can learn if I am a candidate for colostrum collection starting at 37 weeks.
- ☐ I will go with the flow and see where my body and journey leads me.
- ☐ Other: _____





SMART

MY GOALS: DAY ONE, BABY'S BIRTH

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S

SPECIFIC

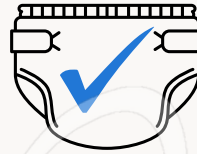
WHAT DO I WANT TO
ACCOMPLISH?

- ☐ I want to breastfeed my baby.
- ☐ If there are any unforeseen medical circumstances, I will be open to the journey and not worry. |

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN
IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?



A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE
ACCOMPLISHED?



8-12 times,
every 2-3 hours
Learn the Latch

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM
WORTHWHILE?

☐ Yes

☐ Maybe

☐ No



T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH
THIS GOAL?



QUALITY FEEDING

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START, ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

720-815-5922

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Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			

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7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



SMART

MY GOALS: DAY TWO

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

*DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?*

S

SPECIFIC

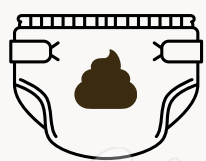
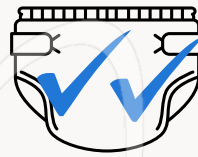
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- ☐ I want to breastfeed my baby.
- ☐ If there are any unforeseen medical circumstances, I will be open to the journey and not worry. |

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?



A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?



8-12 times,
every 2-3 hours
Learning the Latch

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No



T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?



QUALITY FEEDING

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START, ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

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10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



SMART

MY GOALS: DAY THREE

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?

DID I DRINK WATER?

DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S

SPECIFIC

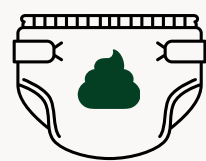
WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

- ☐ I want to breastfeed my baby.
- ☐ My milk is coming in: what is happening to my breasts!
- ☐ My milk is somewhat delayed, and this is ok.
- ☐ Again, did I get breast implants, so painful
- ☐ If there are any unforeseen medical circumstances, I will be open to the journey and not worry.

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?



A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?



8-12 times,
every 2-3 hours

- ☐ Temporary Use of a Nipple Shield
- ☐ Pumping for relief

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?

☐ Yes

☐ Maybe

☐ No



T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?



QUALITY FEEDING

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10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



MY GOALS: DAY FOUR

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S

SPECIFIC

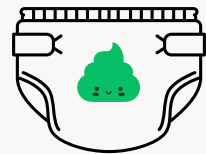
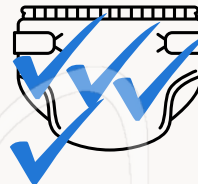
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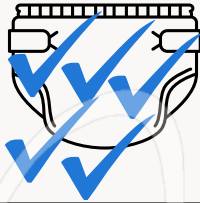
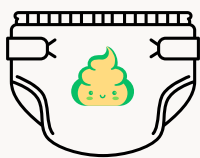
Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



MY GOALS: DAY FIVE

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	☐ I want to breastfeed my baby. ☐ I want to provide breastmilk to my baby. ☐ My milk is somewhat delayed, and this is ok. ☐ If there are any unforeseen medical circumstances, I will be open to the journey and not worry.	
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?		
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?	 8-12 times, every 2-3 hours ☐ Temporary Use of a Nipple Shield ☐ Pumping for relief	
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?	☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No    	
T	<u>TIME BOUND</u> WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?		



QUALITY FEEDING

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START, ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

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Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			

Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



SMART

MY GOALS: DAY SIX

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S

SPECIFIC

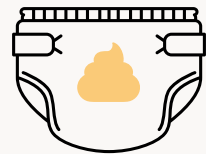
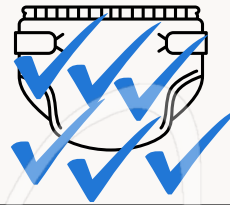
WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

- ☐ I am breastfeeding.
- ☐ I am so proud of myself for my journey.
- ☐ Other: _____

M

MEASURABLE

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?



A

ACHIEVABLE

HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?



8-12 times,
every 2-3 hours

- ☐ Temporary Use of a Nipple Shield
- ☐ Pumping for relief

R

RELEVANT

DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No



T

TIME BOUND

WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?



QUALITY FEEDING

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START, ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

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7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			

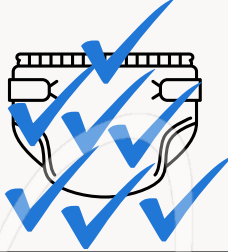
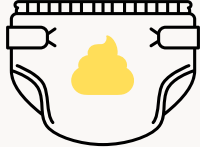
Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			



MY GOALS: DAY SEVEN

MY SELF CARE MANTRA:

DID I EAT?
DID I DRINK WATER?
DID I TAKE MY AFTERNOON NAP?

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	☐ I am breastfeeding. ☐ I am so proud of myself for my journey. ☐ Other: _____	
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?		
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?	 8-12 times, every 2-3 hours ☐ Temporary Use of a Nipple Shield ☐ Pumping for relief	
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?	☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No    	
T	<u>TIME BOUND</u> WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?		



QUALITY FEEDING

YOUR TURN! PLEASE NOTE TIME OF START, ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

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Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			

Time	Type of Feed Breastfeeding (BF) / Bottle (B)/ or Both (BF+ B)	Duation of Said Feed in minutes (if BF+B, only time breast-feeding session)	Quality Score of Said Feed (if BF+B, only score BF part of feed)
7 am			
10 am			
1 pm			
4 pm			
7 pm			
10 pm			
1 am			
4 am			





Well done!

CONGRATULATIONS MAMA!

Way to go



Thank you for letting us be
part of your journey!



Found this helpful?
Find more resources on
nayacare.org

People in crisis should call their local emergency number or the
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.

