

Breastfeeding – a handful of knowledge

Breastfeeding is a natural process

Milk production already begins during pregnancy. For the first six months of its life, a baby needs nothing other than breast milk. After that, it is recommended that infants continue to be breastfed in addition to receiving suitable complementary foods. For as long as the mother and child wish, even for two years or longer.

Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth

Time to fall in love! Prolonged and undisturbed skin-to-skin contact helps establish a strong emotional bond. Often, the baby will then begin to breastfeed of its own accord.

Laid-back breastfeeding

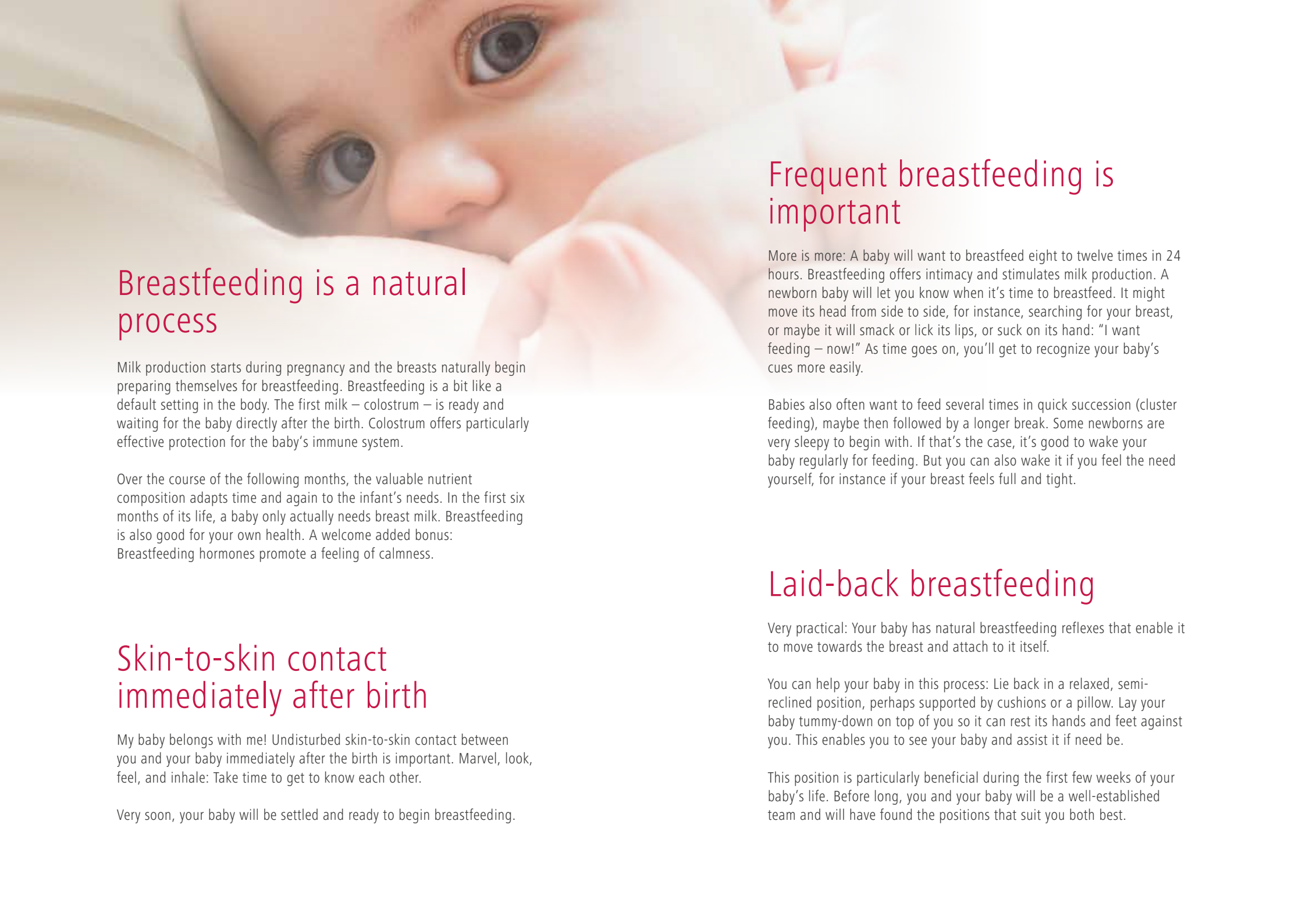
The mother reclines, well supported and relaxed, with her baby tummy-down on top of her. This position helps the newborn find the breast, because its innate breastfeeding reflexes can take effect.

Frequent breastfeeding is important

A baby will want to breastfeed eight to twelve times – or more – in 24 hours. This gives it ample milk and a lot of physical contact.

Hand expressing breast milk

Mothers can also express their milk effectively by hand. It's very convenient, easy to learn, and means they are not reliant on technical devices.



Breastfeeding is a natural process

Milk production starts during pregnancy and the breasts naturally begin preparing themselves for breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is a bit like a default setting in the body. The first milk – colostrum – is ready and waiting for the baby directly after the birth. Colostrum offers particularly effective protection for the baby's immune system.

Over the course of the following months, the valuable nutrient composition adapts time and again to the infant's needs. In the first six months of its life, a baby only actually needs breast milk. Breastfeeding is also good for your own health. A welcome added bonus: Breastfeeding hormones promote a feeling of calmness.

Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth

My baby belongs with me! Undisturbed skin-to-skin contact between you and your baby immediately after the birth is important. Marvel, look, feel, and inhale: Take time to get to know each other.

Very soon, your baby will be settled and ready to begin breastfeeding.

Frequent breastfeeding is important

More is more: A baby will want to breastfeed eight to twelve times in 24 hours. Breastfeeding offers intimacy and stimulates milk production. A newborn baby will let you know when it's time to breastfeed. It might move its head from side to side, for instance, searching for your breast, or maybe it will smack or lick its lips, or suck on its hand: "I want feeding – now!" As time goes on, you'll get to recognize your baby's cues more easily.

Babies also often want to feed several times in quick succession (cluster feeding), maybe then followed by a longer break. Some newborns are very sleepy to begin with. If that's the case, it's good to wake your baby regularly for feeding. But you can also wake it if you feel the need yourself, for instance if your breast feels full and tight.

Laid-back breastfeeding

Very practical: Your baby has natural breastfeeding reflexes that enable it to move towards the breast and attach to it itself.

You can help your baby in this process: Lie back in a relaxed, semi-reclined position, perhaps supported by cushions or a pillow. Lay your baby tummy-down on top of you so it can rest its hands and feet against you. This enables you to see your baby and assist it if need be.

This position is particularly beneficial during the first few weeks of your baby's life. Before long, you and your baby will be a well-established team and will have found the positions that suit you both best.

Hand expressing breast milk

Hand expression is a quick and effective way of collecting milk. It's convenient, easy to learn, and means you are not reliant on technical devices or electricity.



Here's how to do it:

- Wash your hands with soap or apply hand sanitizer.
- Give your breast a short, gentle massage.
- Position your thumb above the nipple and your index finger below the nipple, both about 1–2 inches behind the nipple so that they are exactly opposite each other and form a line with the nipple. (1)
- Press your finger and thumb towards your body, but without moving them apart. (2)
- Compress your finger and thumb together, away from the body, without sliding them over your skin. The breast tissue should always move with your finger and thumb. (3)
- Release the pressure.
- Repeat this sequence of movements in a steady rhythm several times.
- Your milk will start to flow and can be collected.



- As soon as the flow of milk slows down or stops, let go, reposition your thumb and finger, and repeat the process.
- Continue moving around the nipple in this way until you have engaged all the milk ducts.
- Please be careful and gentle at all times. It should not be painful.
- A video tutorial is available at www.nationalestillfoerderung.de

If your baby needs extra colostrum during the first few days of its life, you can hand express and collect it and give it to your baby using a syringe or a spoon.



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On honeymoon with your baby

Back home is when the honeymoon starts. Skin-to-skin contact with their parents gives babies a sense of security. You can take time to get to know each other and settle down as a family.

With your baby close to you at all times, you'll be able to recognize its feeding cues and respond to them right away, making for a smooth and relaxed breastfeeding experience.

Giving birth by cesarean section is no obstacle to breastfeeding. You can recline in the laid-back breastfeeding position, placing your newborn on your stomach at an angle so that its feet point to the side. Or you can place a cushion above your c-section wound. Everything's different and slightly magical – enjoy the new era.



WHO breastfeeding recommendations

It is recommended that babies be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of their life. Your child needs no other foods or liquid. From the seventh month onwards, gradually start introducing complementary foods while continuing to breastfeed up to the age of two years or beyond – whatever works best for you and your child.

The Baby-Friendly Initiative

"Baby-Friendly Hospital" is a system that is established the world over. In Germany, the initiative ensures the quality of our Baby-Friendly certified hospitals. All of them work according to the proven WHO and UNICEF Ten Steps – with tangible success. We create space for love.

Ten steps – the **baby-friendly** way

Here you will find the Ten Steps by WHO and UNICEF, according to which all baby-friendly hospitals operate reliably. You can rely on this.



5



We give you tried and tested tips for relaxed breastfeeding and ensuring an ample milk supply.

6



We only ever formula feed breastfed newborns where medically necessary. We avoid the use of artificial teats.

1

Baby-friendly hospitals have successful policies in place to support bonding, development and breastfeeding.

We are independent of infant formula manufacturers.

2



We regularly train our staff to maintain the highest standards of competency in supporting parents and children.

7



24-hour rooming-in: In our hospital, mothers and healthy newborns stay together day and night.

8



We help you to understand your baby's cues and to respond to them lovingly.

3



Don't be afraid to ask us anything. We provide comprehensive counselling on breastfeeding and building a loving bond.

4



We make sure mothers and their healthy babies have extensive and undisturbed skin-to-skin contact right after birth. Settle down together as a family in your own time.

9



If you opt for an alternative feeding method, we will counsel you individually on bottle feeding and bonding.

10



We invite you to attend breastfeeding support groups and parent & child groups after leaving hospital.

WHO/UNICEF-Initiative BABYFREUNDLICH

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Find out more about us and our hospitals at
www.babyfreundlich.org



For guidance and information on caring for your baby,
visit www.babyfreundlich.tips