

Breastfeeding at home with breast milk fortifier

Information for children, families and carers

We've given you this factsheet to explain how to breastfeed your baby at home with the addition of breast milk fortifier. We hope it helps to answer some of your questions. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

Breast milk fortifier

Breast milk fortifier is a nutritional supplement that can be added to your expressed breast milk. It comes in the form of a powder, which is dissolved into your breast milk. It contains protein, energy, and a range of vitamins and minerals, which will help to support your baby's growth for a short while after they go home from hospital.

Daily feeds and supplements

Breastfeeding

To begin with, your baby will need breastfeeding every two to three hours or at least eight times a day, including at night time.

Breast milk fortifier

For the first eight weeks after their due date, your baby will also need to have a small amount of fortified breast milk before each full feed (eight times a day). We will give you sachets of breast milk fortifier powder to make this. Follow the instructions in this factsheet.

How to make fortified breast milk

Use the breast milk fortifier powder supplied by us, and then by your general practitioner (GP).

1. Before you start, make sure the work surface in the kitchen is clean and dry.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water, and dry them.
3. Express your breast milk using your usual method.

4. Measure and pour 40ml of expressed breast milk into a sterile bottle.
5. Add **nine 1g sachets** of breast milk fortifier powder to the bottle of 40ml breast milk. Gently shake the bottle until the powder has dissolved.
6. Label the bottle with the date and time you made it.
7. Store the bottle of fortified breast milk in the fridge for a maximum of one day (24 hours).

Occasionally, breast milk fortifier powder can cause breast milk to curdle. If this happens, throw it away and repeat the steps above with slightly warmed breast milk. If it keeps happening, contact us for advice.

How to give your baby fortified breast milk

If you are breastfeeding your baby

Using a 5ml syringe, you will need to give your baby 5ml of the fortified breast milk **before** each full feed (eight times per day).

You will need to continue giving your baby fortified breast milk until eight weeks after their due date.

How to feed your baby using a syringe:

1. Hold your baby in an upright position.
2. Use the syringe to slowly squeeze 0.2ml of the supplement into your baby's mouth. Squeeze the supplement to the side of their gums and cheek or onto the front part of their tongue.
3. Let your baby swallow the supplement and then give them another 0.2ml.
4. Keep going until you have given your baby all of the supplement (5ml in total).

Important safety information

- Infant feeding syringes have a free-fastening lid which must be removed before giving expressed colostrum or milk to your baby.
- Always keep syringes and lids away from babies and children.

If you are bottle feeding your baby with expressed breast milk

Using a **small separate** bottle, you will need to give your baby 5ml of the fortified breast milk **before** each normal bottle feed (eight times per day).

When you have given your baby all of the supplement (5ml in total), feed them the rest of the expressed breast milk using a different bottle.

You will need to continue giving your baby fortified breast milk until eight weeks after their due date.

Formula milk

If you decide to give your baby formula milk while they are still having fortified breast milk, please contact us for advice. **Do not add sachets of breast milk fortifier powder to formula milk.**

Monitoring your baby's growth

It is important to weigh your baby regularly. If they continue to follow their growth line (centile) on their growth chart, this means they are drinking enough breast milk for healthy growth.

When to seek medical help

Please contact us if:

- you are having any problems with making or giving the fortified breast milk
- you are concerned that your baby is not tolerating the fortified breast milk
- your baby is having fewer than six feeds in 24 hours
- your baby has not gained any weight in a week (or has lost weight)

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Neonatal community outreach team (NCOT)

Telephone: **07766 994816** (Monday to Saturday, 7.30am to 4.30pm)

Woodland ward (special care baby unit)

Telephone: **023 8120 6553** (out of hours)

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