

What if my baby needs to go to the Neonatal Unit?

You will be encouraged to visit your baby as often as you wish. At first you will be helped to hand express breast milk so that the vital drops of colostrum can be fed to your baby. Once you are expressing larger amounts of milk you will be able to use a hospital breast pump

More information on breastfeeding

Ask your midwife for the leaflet "Off to the best start – important information about feeding your baby".

Ask your midwife or health visitor about practical breastfeeding support available locally such as peer counsellors, baby cafes and breastfeeding groups

Where to get help:

Your Diabetes team contact-

Name:.....



Your Midwifery Team contact-

Name:.....



Local Hospital Contact No.-

Name:.....



Local breastfeeding support contact details:

Name:.....



This leaflet should only be used with the ongoing advice from your Diabetes Team, as part of your plan of care.

National organisations:

You can also get information and support from the following:

- National breastfeeding helpline: 0844 20 909 20
www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk
- La Leche League
www.la leche.org.uk
Helpline : 0845 120 2918
- National Childbirth Trust
www.nct.org.uk
Helpline: 0870 444 8708
- Association of breastfeeding mothers www.abm.me.uk
Helpline: 0844 412 2949

Diabetes in Pregnancy Advisory Group



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Diabetes & Breastfeeding



Thinking about breastfeeding? Your questions answered

Why should I consider breastfeeding?

- Breastfeeding is the best form of nutrition for babies
- It is especially good if your baby is breastfed for at least 6 months
- It helps you and your baby to build a strong bond
- There are plenty of health benefits also:

You

- Less risk of ovarian and breast cancer
- Return to your pre-pregnancy figure faster
- Less risk of weak bones later in life

Your baby

- Less likely to get:
- tummy upsets
 - infections e.g. ear, chest
 - eczema
 - asthma
 - obesity
 - childhood diabetes



Breastfeeding is also convenient with no preparation time or temperature checking required. It is also free!

Can I breastfeed?

Yes. Having diabetes should not stop you from breastfeeding your baby.

- If you have gestational or type 2 diabetes, normally controlled without insulin, breastfeeding will be the same as for women without diabetes
- If you normally need insulin to control your diabetes, you will need to be aware of a few extra points of information



Will my breast-milk be the same as milk from a woman without diabetes?

If your diabetes is well controlled, your milk will have the same composition. Insulin does not pass into the breast-milk.

I normally have insulin for my diabetes. What extra care do I need to take if I am breastfeeding?

- You will need to lower your insulin dose immediately after the birth, and monitor your blood glucose levels carefully to get the correct insulin dose
- Hypos will be more likely to occur as you could need up to 40-50g extra carbohydrate daily
- Eat regular meals containing carbohydrate (starch) and always have some food nearby to eat before or during feeds
- Always take a carbohydrate snack with you when you are out with your baby
- You may need a supper snack to cover your baby's night-time feed
- Continue to monitor your blood sugar levels regularly and seek advice from your diabetes team regarding insulin doses

Can I breastfeed if I am taking tablets for Type 2 diabetes?

You can take either metformin or glibenclamide if you are breastfeeding. The other diabetes tablets should be avoided. Discuss this, and any other tablets you are asked to take, with your diabetes team or your doctor.



Tips for getting breastfeeding established

- At 36 -37 weeks of pregnancy you can express and store some colostrum (early milk). This can be given to your baby if he can't breastfeed after birth or if his/her blood glucose level is low and needs some extra milk. For further advice and support about this ask your midwife in clinic
- Unless your baby needs special care, make sure your baby has skin-to-skin contact with you as soon as possible after the birth
- Whilst you are enjoying this skin-to-skin contact, start breastfeeding. Your colostrum (early milk) is the best food for your baby and will help your baby's blood glucose to stay at a safe level. Ask the midwife to help you to get your baby latched on correctly
- Continue to breastfeed **frequently** by baby led feeding, and at least every 2-3 hours
- It will take around 3 days for your milk to come in. In the meantime your baby is getting the vital colostrum which will keep up his/her blood glucose levels

