



Breastfeeding Support

For parents who need information or help with breastfeeding / chestfeeding

Feeding Your Baby

Many health experts recommend breast milk for the first 6 months. Many parents breastfeed longer, and others may need to stop earlier. **Both are okay.**

Formula is also a safe, healthy option for families who need or choose it.

Why Breastfeeding Matters:

Breast milk is full of antibodies that help keep your baby healthy. Antibodies are proteins that help the body fight germs.

Breastfeeding or pumping is good for parents too! It can help your body heal after birth. It helps your uterus go back to its normal size and lowers the chance of heavy bleeding (postpartum hemorrhage). In the long run, it may also lower your risk of health problems like diabetes and heart disease.



Tips for First-Time Parents:

- Provide skin-to-skin contact often and try different positions that help your baby latch well.
- Feed your baby whenever they show signs of hunger, such as licking their lips or sucking on their hands.
- Remember that crying can be a late sign of hunger.
- Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water will help you make milk for your baby.
- If you are pumping and feeding, work with a lactation professional to protect your milk supply and make sure pumping works for you.

Breastfeeding Challenges

Feeding your baby can be hard. If you have any trouble, please contact a lactation professional, your primary care provider (PCP), or WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) for support. Some common problems and how to fix them:

- **Pain or soreness:** Check your baby's latch and try new positions.
- **Difficulty feeding after returning to work:** Pump milk and keep it in the fridge or freezer.
- **Concerns about low milk supply:** Feed or pump more often and check for a deep latch. If you are still worried, you can try power pumping to help your body make more milk. Power pumping is short, repeated pumping sessions over about an hour to help increase milk supply.
- **Trouble getting your baby to latch:** Try new positions and help your baby latch when their mouth opens wide.
- **Your baby cries often:** Look for signs of hunger and try calming with skin-to-skin contact.
- **Your baby is not gaining weight:** Contact your baby's PCP right away.
- **Trouble using a pump or other feeding device:** Make sure the device fits and check the settings and user manual.
- **Feeling unsure about how feeding is going:** Reach out for support.



Where to Get Help

Lactation professionals can be found by visiting Partnership's Community Resources page under Perinatal Services. Scan the QR code on page 6. WIC also has lactation support at no cost to you and can make referrals as needed.



Relactation (Start Breastfeeding Again)

Parents may stop breastfeeding for many reasons, **which is okay**. If you want to start again, it is possible. This is called relactation.

Relactation means making breast milk again after stopping for a while. It takes time and patience, but many parents are able to bring back some, or even all, of their milk supply.

To help your milk return:

- Feed your baby often or pump on a regular schedule.
- Pump often to keep and increase your milk supply.

Making milk again may take days or weeks. If progress feels slow, do not give up. Be kind to yourself during the process. Every parent's journey is different.

Breastfeeding Resources

Partnership offers breast pumps to members. Breast pumps are available to members 30 days before their delivery date and up to 1 year after delivery. Ask your provider about getting one.

Donor milk is available at no cost in certain situations. To get donor milk, you will need an approval from your provider.

You can get breastfeeding support and education through your local county WIC office. Call **(844) 469-3264** to learn more. For more perinatal services, visit our Community Resources page and click on the county you live in:





Partnership is here to keep you and your baby healthy. Call the Population Health Department at **(855) 798-8764**, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to learn more about perinatal services or sign up for the Growing Together Program.

Partnership HealthPlan of California – Your Partner in Health