

BREASTFEEDING MULTIPLES

Breastfeeding* twins, triplets or more is important.

*Note: The terms breast milk/breastfed/breastfeeding are widely used, but human milk/chestfed/chestfeeding can be used interchangeably. The terms are meant to be inclusive of all parents, caregivers and significant others.

BREASTFEEDING MULTIPLES IS IMPORTANT TO THE HEALTH OF YOU AND YOUR BABIES

- Multiple birth babies are more likely to be born small or prematurely which puts them at a higher risk of infection. Your milk is the best food for their special needs; it is easy to digest, supports growth and development and boosts their ability to fight infections

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE BREASTFEEDING MULTIPLES A SUCCESS?

PREPARE DURING PREGNANCY

- Learn about breastfeeding during your pregnancy and what to expect in the first few weeks after giving birth
- Arrange for help from family and friends during the early weeks to help with housework, cooking, shopping and care of older children
- Multiples are often born early; learn about breastfeeding a premature or near-term baby and how to build and protect your milk supply
- Discuss with your health care professional if hand expressing colostrum after 37 weeks of pregnancy, twice a day, for up to 10 minutes each time is a safe option for you and your babies
- Talk to parents in your community who have breastfed multiples

- Connect with your hospital's Lactation Consultant or Public Health for a prenatal consultation to discuss your feeding goals and create a plan on how to get breastfeeding off to the best possible start
- Visit york.ca/Breastfeeding to learn about pregnancy and breastfeeding

GET OFF TO A GOOD START

- Hold your babies skin-to-skin right after birth or as soon as possible. This helps your babies adjust to life outside the womb, encourages your babies to latch and feed at the breast and helps increase milk supply
- Breastfeed your babies within the first hour after birth when possible. If your babies are unable to breastfeed after birth, hand express within the first hour and every two to three hours after that. Any milk expressed can be provided to the care team for your babies or if your babies are rooming in with you, can be offered by spoon, cup or syringe. Ask your nurse for support. Ask for help to learn this skill
- Continue to breastfeed and/or express milk frequently at least eight times in 24 hours
- Record feedings as well as wet and dirty diapers
- The first two weeks are very important for establishing your milk supply. Ensure there is regular and effective milk removal happening to support your milk production
- Get help early – early support can help protect your milk supply while it is being established
- Connect with Public Health for support in the community

PUBLIC HEALTH
1-800-361-5653
TTY: Dial 711
york.ca/Breastfeeding



Scan me
for more information

KEEP YOUR BABIES CLOSE

- Keep your babies close to you so you can respond to their early feeding cues: making noises, stretching, bringing hands to mouth, smacking lips. Bring your babies to the breast every time you see these cues
- Hold your babies skin-to-skin as much as possible. If you need some help with this, you can have your partner hold the babies skin-to-skin. If your babies are under special care and not in the room with you, spend as much time as possible with them skin-to-skin

KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

- Ask for help while in the hospital. Your nurse or lactation consultant can help you get breastfeeding off to a great start and make a breastfeeding plan

EXPRESSING YOUR MILK

- Express your milk by hand or pump if your babies are unable to breastfeed or they need more milk after a breastfeed. This will help protect your milk supply and provide you with the extra milk needed to feed your babies
- Use a high-quality double electric pump. Your nurse can tell you where to rent or buy a pump. Remove milk often, even at night. Express a minimum of eight times in 24 hours

CAN I FEED TWO BABIES AT THE SAME TIME?

- Some parents breastfeed one baby at a time while others breastfeed both babies at the same time (tandem feeding)
- Do what works best for you and your babies
- Most parents say that tandem feeding saves time and is a great way to spend time with both babies
- You may need practice and support to learn to tandem feed multiples

TANDEM FEEDING

- Find a comfortable position with your body supported
- Lean back, get comfortable and use pillows to help support you if needed
- If one baby is still learning to latch, let this baby latch first
- Make sure that each baby is feeding well by listening for swallows
- Compress or massage your breasts when swallows slow down
- Offer one breast to each baby per feed; switch breasts at the next feed. If a baby cues for more after you can place them back on either breast



Football and cradle



Double football



Front cross



Upright latch

HEALTH CONNECTION

York Region Public Health offers free infant feeding assistance and support.

To speak with a registered nurse, registered dietitian or to book a virtual or in-person clinic appointment, contact Health Connection for free, confidential information, advice and resources.

Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After hours, leave a message, we will contact you during operating hours.

Call **1-800-361-5653**, TTY Dial 711, chat live at york.ca/NurseChat or visit york.ca/HealthConnection

You can also call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7 or chat live at ontario.ca/health811

911 is always the first number you should call during emergency situations. If you're worried for your health or that of your child, call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room.