



Care Plan for Breastfeeding Your Late Preterm Baby (Born at 34–37 6/7 Weeks Gestation)

Babies born between 34–37 weeks of gestation are late preterm infants. If your baby is late preterm, he may be sleepy and not wake on his own for feedings. He will need to learn how to coordinate sucking, swallowing and breathing in order to feed. He may become over-stimulated by loud talking or lights. Late preterm babies have many of the same behaviors as a preterm baby until they reach 38 weeks. In order for a late preterm baby to feed optimally, we use special developmental techniques that are appropriate for his gestational age. We plan baby's care based on his gestational age. The lactation consultant will be able to show you some developmental techniques to support you and your baby when feeding.

Care Plan Goals:

- Support baby while he is learning to breastfeed
- Offer baby supplemental feedings in order to keep him well-nourished while maturing and learning to breastfeed
- Establish and maintain your milk production so that you can transition baby to breastfeeding when ready

It is important to wake your baby to feed every 3 hours around the clock. Babies need to eat a minimum of 8 times in 24 hours in order to gain weight.

Every 3 Hours:

Step 1 Attempt Breastfeeding

- Follow the *Waking Baby to Breastfeed Techniques*
- You may need to swaddle baby to support him for more effective breastfeeding (keep his hands free)
- Attempt to get baby to latch on for 5 to 10 minutes. If baby is able to latch on and begins breastfeeding, allow him to continue longer if effectively feeding (See *Signs of Effective Breastfeeding*)

Step 2 Offer Supplement

- If baby does not breastfeed effectively at least 15 minutes, offer supplement of ½–1 oz. (15–30 ml) expressed breast milk or formula*
- If baby continues to need a supplement, increase the amount supplemented by small increments of 7–10 mL each day.

- Follow the *Care Plan for Bottle Feeding Your Baby*.
- Finish breastfeeding and bottle feeding session within 30 minutes to prevent weight loss.

Step 3 Express Your Milk with a Breast Pump

- Express your breast milk with a hospital-grade breast pump to better stimulate your milk production (you can rent a hospital-grade pump from a medical supply company)
- Follow the *Care Plan for Establishing Milk Production with a Hospital-Grade Breast Pump*

* Note: If you have a partner, family member, or friend helping you, they can supplement your baby while you pump. If not, offer the supplement, then pump afterward. Check with baby's health care provider about how long to continue supplementing your baby.

Transitioning Baby to Exclusive Breastfeeding

As your baby matures and becomes more skilled at breastfeeding, he will be able to stay awake and feed long enough to obtain a full feeding. When this happens, he will no longer need a supplemental bottle afterward. He may start spitting up or refusing to take the supplement after breastfeeding. It is important to stay in touch with your baby's doctor to make sure that he is gaining weight weekly when supplements are discontinued. It is also important to stay in touch with lactation consultants who are experienced with late preterm babies (TriHealth Breastfeeding Care Center 513 862 7867 option 3).