

# Breastfeeding pros and cons

Some mothers are determined to breastfeed their babies, some opt to combine breast and bottle (formula) feeding, while others exclusively formula fed. Let's consider the options.

## Breastfeeding

Feeding your baby can be very rewarding and a time to enjoy a real feeling of closeness. Babies get far more than just nutrition from a feed - they enjoy the cuddle, the comfort and the satisfaction of a full tummy. In addition, feeding your baby has an impact on his health, not just in infancy but in the long term, too. In the UK, most mums start off breastfeeding.

Breastmilk supplies all the nutrients your baby needs for about first six months and it's the normal, physiological way to feed a human baby and is always at the correct temperature. Research shows that babies who aren't breastfed have a higher risk of infection, and are more likely to spend time in hospital during their first year. This difference does not depend on the social or economic status of the baby's family - the gaps in health persist even when these factors are taken into account. Breastfed babies are at lower risk of conditions such as eczema, asthma and diabetes.

Many mothers need help and support to breastfeed, and access to good information to overcome problems. If you don't breastfeed, for whatever reason, then your baby will need infant formula milk. Mixed feeding - giving your baby formulamilk as well as breastfeeding - can be a way to maintain some breastfeeding if you return to work, or if breastfeeding alone isn't working out for you. Because you need to breastfeed often to keep up a supply of milk, mixed feeding can lead to breastmilk production dwindling sooner than you wish.

### What might I need to buy?

- nursing bras
- breastpads
- breastpump  
(for expressing milk)
- bottles and teats
- sterilising equipment



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## Formula feeding

Formula milk is a nutritionally complete 'casein' (curd) based infant milk. It is specially made with a balance of milk proteins for hungrier bottle fed babies and may help delay weaning until the recommended time. Formula can be used at any age from birth onwards and can also be used when moving from breast feeding to bottle feeding or to complement breast feeding.

It is essential that your baby receives the right nutrients for her growing little body.

**Protein** is important for growth and development, as well as to help strengthen the immune system. **Vitamins and minerals** are for healthy eyes, skin, bones, teeth, muscle and nerve function, and a strong immune system. The majority of your baby's energy and growth comes from the intake of **fat and carbohydrate**. And you may have heard of **LCPs** (Omega 3 and Omega 6 families) which are essential for brain and eye development. Formula milk contains all of these vital nutrients and is nutritionally complete.

It is available in 900g and 450g cans of powder – ideal to use and store at home. It is also available in measured powder sachets which are quick and easy to prepare when baby is hungry, and also in ready to use cartons of 1L & 250ml - perfect when you're at home or out and about with your baby.

### What might I need to buy?

- bottles and teats
- formula milk
- sterilising equipment

