

How to practice responsive breastfeeding

Responsive breastfeeding involves **recognizing and responding to** your baby's **hunger** and **fullness** cues.

Babies show they're **hungry** by:

- turning their head from side to side
- sucking on their hands
- bringing their arms and legs close to their body
- increasing their movements



Babies show they're **full** by:

- turning their head away from the breast
- closing their mouth
- relaxing their arms and legs
- closing their eyes
- falling asleep



If babies are **very hungry**, they may:

- become very upset
- start crying



Feeding babies before these cues can help avoid a frantic or fussy feed.

If babies are **offered the breast when they are full**, they may:

- push their caregiver away
- arch their back
- become very upset
- start crying



To practice responsive breastfeeding, feed your baby when they show signs of hunger, and allow your baby to stop eating when they signal they are full.

Another part of responsive breastfeeding is providing a **comfortable feeding environment** and **nurturing behaviours** for your baby. This includes:

- making eye contact with your baby
- smiling and changing facial expressions
- talking to your baby
- using gentle touch
- humming or singing to your baby

Responsive feeding can **promote bonding** between baby and caregivers, help baby **develop healthy eating patterns**, and ensure babies eat to satisfy their ever-changing growth needs.

