

Growth Spurts

Growth spurts or periods of increased nursing, commonly occur at around 10 days to 3 weeks of age, 6 weeks of age, 3 months of age, and 6 months of age, but they can happen at any time. During these times your baby may demand to feed more often than he has previously, maybe as often as every hour. He may seem fussy and less content after feedings than he has in days before. This increase in the number of feedings is baby's way of increasing your milk supply to meet his needs. This is not the time to supplement or adhere to a strict schedule as your breasts need the extra stimulation in order to "boost up" your supply. Simply allow your baby the extra time at the breast that he needs. In a few days when he has increased your supply, he will return to his previous nursing pattern.

"Don't Watch The Clock!" Don't watch the clock for how long baby has been nursing. Don't watch the clock for how long it's been since baby last wanted to nurse. Don't watch the clock for how many times you've been awakened that night to nurse.

Growth spurts happen. They happen with all nursing couplets. Some babies protest more about them and others seem to sail through them with the greatest of ease.

Signs of a Growth Spurt

- ✚ Baby is nursing often or almost nonstop
- ✚ A baby who was previously sleeping through the night is now waking to nurse several times
- ✚ Baby will latch and unlatch, fussing in between

These signs are all signals to the mom's body to "MAKE MORE MILK NOW!" Our bodies listen very well if we will merely respond to the baby's needs. The extra suckling will stimulate your body to make more milk.

Growth Spurts (continued)

Often Observed After a Growth Spurt

- + Baby sleeps extra for a day or two
- + Mom is a bit fuller than usual for a day or so
- + Baby calms down at the breast
- + You may see an increase in wettings with the increased supply baby is drinking

Growth spurts happen about the time you think you are beginning to understand your baby's signals, they abruptly changed. The frequent requests to nurse can be confusing as well as the frequency with which growth spurts happen within the first few months. If you respond to your baby's signals to nurse during a growth spurt and do not interfere with them in any manner, your body will quickly respond and increase supply. Typically it happens within 24 to 48 hours. Sometimes growth spurts seem to drag on for a week. This would be a good time to make sure you're drinking plenty water.

Don't allow a growth spurt to rob you of your confidence in nursing. Instead, allow it to instill confidence in your ability to read your baby's cues. Your confidence will be further rewarded as your supply increases and your baby settles back down into a happy breastfeeding baby again, with a smart mommy who knew that sometimes baby really does know best and our job is to listen.