

# Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding has benefits for children and mothers. Some of the benefits for children are:

- Breast milk contains all the essential nutrients your baby needs until 6 months of age.
- It provides enough hydration until the baby is 6 months old.
- It supports healthy brain development.



## WHEN SHOULD I START BREASTFEEDING?

- Start Breastfeeding within an hour of birth.
- This first milk provides protection to your baby against infectious diseases.
- Consider that each mother's experience is unique and does not always go perfectly.
- Breastfeeding is a learned process. It can take some time for you and your baby to adjust to it.



## HOW LONG SHOULD I BREASTFEED?

- If possible, breastfeed your baby for at least the first year of life. Continuing until the child is 2 brings added health benefits.



## SHOULD I GIVE WATER TO A BABY YOUNGER THAN 6 MONTHS OLD?

- No. Adding water before this age increases the risk of diarrhea and malnutrition.



## WHEN SHOULD I START GIVING OTHER FOODS TO MY BABY BESIDES BREASTMILK?

- Starting at six months, other foods should be added.
- If possible, exclusively breastfeed during the first six months.



## WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM NOT ABLE TO BREASTFEED?

- If you find that you are not able to breastfeed, there are still ways you can bond with and nurture your baby.
- Although it does not contain all the benefits of breast milk, infant formula can be used as a substitute when needed.
- Prepare it with clean drinking water and follow the instructions in the package.
- Contact your clinical provider.



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING?

- You can see and hear the baby swallowing.
- There is a rhythmic suck.
- Baby's arms and hands are relaxed.
- Diapers are regularly soaked.
- Stool changes from dark to light brown by day 3.

