

Breastfeeding a premature or high-risk baby: Follow a schedule for success.

If you had a premature or high-risk baby, it is still possible for you to breastfeed. But because your baby is not yet nursing, you need to tell your body to produce milk. To do this, we recommend that you:

- ▶ Hand express milk within **1 hour** of birth
- ▶ Hand express or pump every **2-3 hours** during the day (at least 8 times)
- ▶ Hand express or pump no less than every **5 hours** at night



When you have a premature or high-risk baby, keep in mind that it may take up to a week for your milk to come in. Your baby may have less muscle strength, less coordinated suck, swallow, and breathing, or take a longer time getting milk from the breast.

Stages of Breastfeeding

Understanding these different stages can help you during your breastfeeding journey.

LOVE is skin to skin time. This helps babies learn to breastfeed, and helps stabilize their breathing, sugar levels and heart rate after birth.

LICK is when babies start to be at the breast, licking and getting used to the taste of breastmilk and moving their mouths to eat.

LATCH is when babies begin to suckle at the breast. They may not get a lot of milk out, and you will still need to pump, but they are learning.

LEARN is when babies learn to get more milk out while they nurse.

LEAVE is when you go home. Babies may still be taking supplements from a bottle as well as nursing. They will gradually transition to fully feeding at the breast as they gain weight and strength. We have clinics that offer outpatient support if you need it. Call 276-MILK to learn more.