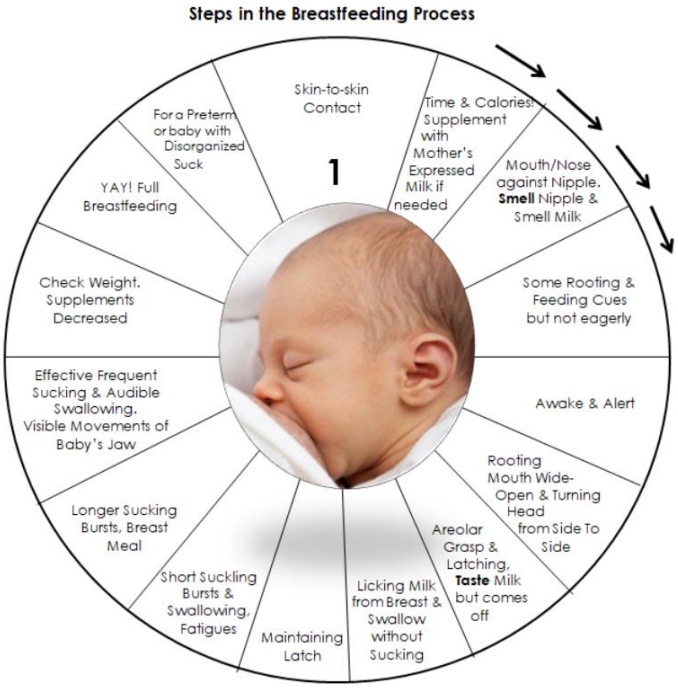
Breastfeeding Progression Wheel



Many things can impact a newborn's ability to latch and feed immediately after birth.

This is what the steps in the Breastfeeding Process can look like[1]:
- First and most important is Skin to Skin Contact;
- For the non-latching baby, give the baby Time and Calories! (if needed, ideally mothers own milk as supplement);
- While Skin to Skin have baby's mouth/nose against the nipple. Baby will smell the nipple and smell the milk.
- Baby will show some rooting and feeding cues but maybe not eagerly.
- An awake and alert baby will root with a mouth wide-open and turning head from side to side.
- Then baby will grasp the areola and latch, tasting the milk, but might come off again.
- Baby may lick the milk from breast and swallow without sucking.
- Before you know it baby will be maintaining the latch!
- Give short suckling bursts and swallows, but may fatigue easily.
- Baby will progress to longer sucking bursts and enjoy a breast meal.
- Effective frequent sucking and audible swallowing and visible movements of baby's jaw follows.
- Supplements (if needed) are decreased gradually while keeping an eye on baby's weight.
- And voila! Baby and mom are enjoying full breastfeeding.

Information presented here is general and not a substitute for personalized treatment from a qualified medical professional.

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[1] Maastrup R, Hansen BM, Kronborg H, Bojesen SN, Hallum K, Frandsen A, et al. (2014) **Breastfeeding Progression in Preterm Infants** Is Influenced by Factors in Infants, Mothers and Clinical Practice: The Results of a National Cohort Study with High Breastfeeding Initiation Rates. PLoS ONE 9(9): e108208. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0108208 ● Lober, Angela & Dodgson, Joan & Kelly, Lesly. (2020). Using the Preterm Infant Breastfeeding Behavior Scale (PIBBS) With Late Preterm Infants. Clinical Lactation. 11. CLINLACT-D. 10.1891/CLINLACT-D-20-00001. ● Nyqvist KH, Sjödén PO, Ewald U. The development of preterm infants' breastfeeding behavior. Early Hum Dev. 1999 Jul;55(3):247-64. doi: 10.1016/s0378-3782(99)00025-0. PMID: 10463789