

## Rousing a Sleepy Baby

Babies born at 38 weeks or less or babies that have jaundice are often very sleepy and may need help to wake up and feed.

### When should I attempt a feeding?

- Follow your babies feeding cues. Cues include small mouth movements or lip smacking or moving hands to mouth.
- Attempt a feeding when your baby is beginning to stir out of a deep sleep, and showing some small movements of head, arms or legs, or restless sleep.
- After the first 24 hours of life babies should begin taking at least 8 good feedings in a 24hour period.

### How can I wake my baby to feed well?

- First check the diaper and unwrap your baby.
- Sit your baby up. This is a waking up position.
- Do some gentle baby sit-ups by slowly leaning your baby forward and back.
- Talk to your baby. Babies often respond best to the sound of their parent's voices.

### Skin to Skin

If your baby still appears very drowsy, undress your baby down to the diaper only and place your baby skin to skin. It will help to remove your bra and wear a soft, warm jacket or gown that will wrap around you both.

Place your baby's head just above and between your breasts and his feet towards your feet. Let your baby bring his hands to his mouth. Talk to your baby and rub his back and head gently.





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If your baby is ready to feed, he will begin to suck on his fist, drool a little and give you little kisses as he searches for something to suck. He will then begin to push over to one side towards your breast.

Help your baby to ease down onto your breast. Try to keep his face in contact with your chest as he moves toward your nipple. His hands will continue to be close to his mouth, this prompts stronger searching and sucking instincts.

## Feeding

- Get into a comfortable, well supported position so that you will be relaxed while your baby feeds. This will help your milk let down or release when baby suckles.
- Use pillows to support your arms while you hold your baby.
- Babies suckle using clusters of sucks followed by a brief rest or pause. After this short rest it may be helpful to prompt baby to begin sucking again.
- Rub his back or head, or gently jiggle your baby toward the breast.
- Continue to support underneath your breast and bring your forefinger under your baby's chin.
- You may use the hand that is supporting your breast to gently massage or compress your breast. This can help to increase the milk flow for baby.



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Please call your doctor for any questions or concerns you may have regarding this information.

*The information in this handout is not meant to replace the advice from your own doctor. Please ask your doctor any questions you may have. This educational material was developed by a team of experts from throughout ProHealth Care.*

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