



FED IS BEST FOUNDATION

# FED IS BEST

## *Preparing to Feed Your Newborn Checklist*



FED IS BEST INFANT FEEDING COURSE

## ABOUT US

# WELCOME TO THE FED IS BEST COMMUNITY!

We're thrilled to have you here. As coauthors of the Fed Is Best book, we're passionate about revolutionizing how parents approach feeding their babies, ensuring every child is comfortable, well-fed, and thriving.

Our team includes Dr. Christie del Castillo-Hegyí, an emergency physician and breastfeeding complications researcher; Jody Segrave-Daly, RN, a seasoned newborn ICU nurse, nursery nurse, and retired IBCLC; and Lynnette Hafken, MA, IBCLC, an experienced lactation consultant with a background in both hospital and private practice.

We understand that every baby and every family is unique. Some mothers have abundant breast milk, others have a partial supply, and some have none at all—and that's completely normal! Our mission is to empower parents to listen to their instincts and their babies to find the feeding approach that works best for them.

Join us in celebrating all paths to a healthy, thriving baby and family. And don't forget to pick up a copy of the Fed Is Best book, sign up for the future Fed Is Best Safe Infant Feeding Course, and discover how to make feeding your baby a joyful, stress-free experience!



# THREE

# TRIMESTERS

## FIRST TRIMESTER

START RESEARCHING INFANT FEEDING METHODS, FIND AN OBSTETRIC PROVIDER WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR CHOICES, START THINKING OF YOUR IDEAL INFANT YOUR FEEDING REGIMEN

## SECOND TRIMESTER

GATHER YOUR PERINATAL SUPPORT PEOPLE, FIND TRUSTED SOURCES OF INFANT FEEDING INFORMATION AND SUPPORT, START RESEARCHING AND SELECTING YOUR HOSPITAL OR BIRTH FACILITY

## THIRD TRIMESTER

LEARN THE SKILLS NEEDED TO FEED YOUR BABY, LEARN THE SIGNS OF A FED VS. A HUNGRY BABY, DOCUMENT YOUR FEEDING PLAN AND SHARE IT WITH YOUR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, PURCHASE INFANT FEEDING EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

# FIRST TRIMESTER CHECKLIST

START TO STUDY INFANT FEEDING METHODS TO SEE WHAT WOULD WORK BEST FOR YOU, YOUR BABY, AND YOUR FAMILY

- Start studying the Fed Is Best book and use it through your pregnancy to prepare for feeding your baby.
- Decide how you wish to feed your baby.
- Find an obstetrician or certified nurse midwife who can support your infant feeding goals.
- Discuss your feeding goals with your obstetric provider.
- Assess potential barriers and risk factors for feeding challenges discussed in the Fed Is Best book with your obstetric provider, particularly if you are breastfeeding.
- Join the Fed Is Best Parent Community on Facebook.
- If you are a licensed health professional and want to advocate for infant feeding safety in hospitals, consider joining the Fed Is Best Health Professional Group.

# SECOND TRIMESTER CHECKLIST

FIND YOUR SUPPORT TEAM, RESOURCES, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, AND HOSPITAL OR BIRTH FACILITY

- Find your support team including friends and family.
- Find trusted sources of breastfeeding and/or formula feeding information that provide citations to high-quality research. Recommendations should be backed by randomized controlled trials (RCTs), which is the highest level of evidence available.
  - For example, RCTs have shown that judicious supplementation with 10 mL of formula or banked donor milk in breastfed newborns with  $\geq 5\%$  or  $> 75$  percentile weight loss in the first 48 hours after birth has been shown to either improve or have no effect on long term breastfeeding rates and can prevent readmission for feeding complications like jaundice and dehydration.[1-5]
- Start researching the infant feeding policies of hospitals or birth facilities:
  - Are they are inclusive of combo-feeding or formula feeding?
  - What is their policy on providing formula for non-medically indicated supplementation?
  - What are their protocols for monitoring adequate feeding?
  - Do they have nursery services?
  - How many newborns are readmitted for suboptimal feeding jaundice, dehydration, and hypoglycemia a week?

# THIRD TRIMESTER CHECKLIST

LEARN INFANT FEEDING SKILLS AND HOW TO ADDRESS FEEDING PROBLEMS, PURCHASE FEEDING TOOLS, FILL OUT YOUR FEEDING PLAN

- Choose your hospital or birthing facility.
- Select your baby's physician by setting up a prenatal clinic visit.
- Learn the signs of hunger and satisfaction, adequate vs. inadequate feeding.
- Learn about safe weight loss limits, how to calculate percent weight loss, and how to use the Newborn Weight Loss Tool at <https://newbornweight.org/>.
- Learn about bilirubin (jaundice), sodium (dehydration), and glucose (blood sugar) levels of a well-fed baby.
- Document your feeding plan by filling out the Fed is Best Feeding Plan at [fedisbestbook.org/feeding-plan](https://fedisbestbook.org/feeding-plan).
- Print out the helpful checklists, tables, infographics from the Fed is Best book website at the [fedisbestbook.org](https://fedisbestbook.org) to review and bring to your hospital or birth facility.

## THIRD TRIMESTER

# CHECKLIST

LEARN INFANT FEEDING SKILLS AND HOW TO ADDRESS FEEDING PROBLEMS, PURCHASE FEEDING TOOLS, FILL OUT YOUR FEEDING PLAN

- Share and discuss your feeding plan with your obstetrician/CNM during a prenatal visit and with your hospital obstetric provider, pediatrician, and nurses when you arrive at the health facility where you will deliver.
- Have your feeding plan placed in your medical record.
- Consider creating a feeding plan placard found in the Fed Is Best Feeding Plan to post in your room.

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## FOR NURSING PARENTS

# CHECKLIST

LEARN HOW TO BREASTFEED/CHESTFEED WHILE ENSURING ADEQUATE FEEDING IN THE DAYS BEFORE FULL MILK PRODUCTION

- Learn how to position and latch a baby through written and video instruction.
- Learn about hand expression of colostrum and start collecting and freezing it (at 37 weeks) if desired.
- Know when to have your breastfeeding latch, transfer of milk, and baby assessed for breastfeeding difficulties and learn about the methods used to assess them (weighted feeds, pumping to estimate supply, NEWT, etc.) and how accurate they are, which is discussed in the Fed Is Best book.
- Decide what you want to do if your newborn shows signs of persistent hunger or develops a medical necessity for supplementation.
- Learn how to supplement while maintaining your milk supply and continued latching if it becomes necessary.
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# CHECKLIST

LEARN INFANT FEEDING SKILLS AND HOW TO ADDRESS FEEDING PROBLEMS, PURCHASE FEEDING TOOLS, FILL OUT YOUR FEEDING PLAN

- Learn about different methods of supplementing (bottles or syringes) with expressed milk/formula and purchase equipment needed for the hospital and at home if it becomes necessary. Recommended methods for supplementing in the hospital include:
  - Disposable curve-tipped syringes for supplementing at the breast
  - If using bottles, ready-to-feed 2 oz bottles of formula with disposable sterile newborn size nipples
  - Sterile nipples without the bottle for feeding small volumes of expressed colostrum
  - Supplemental nursing systems for supplementing larger volumes at the breast, while useful at home, can be difficult to clean and sanitize in the hospital
  
- Decide what kind of milk, expressed breast milk (EBM), formula, and/or banked human milk (BHM) you would want to supplement and learn how much milk newborns need to be satisfied.

# CHECKLIST

LEARN INFANT FEEDING SKILLS AND HOW TO ADDRESS FEEDING PROBLEMS, PURCHASE FEEDING TOOLS, FILL OUT YOUR FEEDING PLAN

- If you want to supplement with human milk, some parents express colostrum after 37 weeks.
  - You should know that colostrum has fewer calories than mature milk[6] and a clinical trial has found that supplemental feeding with prenatally collected colostrum does not reduce the risk of hypoglycemia admission.[7] Sometimes, banked human milk or formula is needed to provide enough calories and fluid to prevent insufficient feeding complications.
- If you wish to supplement with banked donor milk, check if it is available at your hospital or birth facility and what the criteria are for getting it.
- Decide if you want to bring your own ready-to-feed formula 2-ounce nursettes and sterile nipples in case formula supplementation is needed to prevent unwanted delays related to hospital policies on supplemental feeding.

## FOR NURSING PARENTS

# CHECKLIST

LEARN INFANT FEEDING SKILLS AND HOW TO ADDRESS FEEDING PROBLEMS, PURCHASE FEEDING TOOLS, FILL OUT YOUR FEEDING PLAN

- Consider getting other accessories for the hospital: nursing pillow, nursing cover, nipple shields for flat or inverted nipples, nipple ointment, curve-tipped syringes, hands-free pumping bra, etc.
- Consider getting other accessories for home: supplemental nursing system (as it is difficult to clean in the hospital), baby scale
- Take an online or in person breastfeeding class; bring your questions. (Fed Is Best Course is coming soon!)
- Bring your sanitized pump to the health facility where you are delivering, in case you need to be separated from your baby or there is a question about colostrum/milk production. To use a personal pump safely in the hospital, you need to be able to clean and sanitize it. Things to bring for this purpose:
  - Commercially available breast pump wipes or,
  - A clean plastic bin, dish detergent, and paper towels to wash and dry parts
  - A microwavable breast pump sanitizing bag (Make sure you allow the parts to cool before use to avoid burns.)

## FOR PUMPING PARENTS

# CHECKLIST

RESEARCH AND PURCHASE BREAST PUMP AND ACCESSORIES, LEARN HOW TO CLEAN, SANITIZE, ASSEMBLE, AND USE A PUMP

- Fill out a feeding plan and discuss it with your obstetric provider and your prospective pediatrician.
- Print out the pumped milk feeding checklist.
- Check what breast pumps your health insurance will cover.
- Research and purchase a breast pump that meets your needs.
- Learn how to sanitize and use it before delivery (use only after 37 weeks gestation).
- Get the correct breast pump flange size close to your expected delivery date. (Read the "Breast Shields and Flanges" article for more on this.)
- Learn how to assemble and operate your pump before delivery.
- Learn how to express breast milk with your pump (but not before 37 weeks and only with clearance from your obstetric provider).
- Learn to hand express colostrum.

## FOR PUMPING PARENTS

# CHECKLIST

RESEARCH AND PURCHASE BREAST PUMP AND ACCESSORIES, LEARN HOW TO CLEAN, SANITIZE, ASSEMBLE, AND USE A PUMP

- Purchase needed breast pump accessories.
- Set up your pumping station at home.
- For exclusive pumping parents: Figure out how you want to handle the first few days, in which pumping does not usually yield enough to fully feed your baby.
  - Consider if you prefer to supplement with BHM or formula.
  - If you prefer BHM for supplementation, ask if it will be available for your baby.
- Talk to other EP parents for helpful tips.
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# CHECKLIST

CHOOSE YOUR PREFERRED FORMULA, PURCHASE BOTTLES AND NIPPLES, LEARN HOW TO PREPARE FORMULA AND BOTTLE-FEEDING TECHNIQUES

- Fill out a feeding plan indicating your plan to formula feed and inform your pediatrician and obstetric provider; ask them any questions you may have.
- Learn more about different bottles, nipples, formula types, and more in the Fed Is Best book.
- Learn about upright positioning and responsive feeding during bottle feeding in the Fed Is Best book.
- Purchase your chosen formula, bottles, and compatible slow flow newborn nipples before delivery.
- Decide if you want to bring your own ready-to-feed formula nursettes and sterile nipples to the hospital.
- Figure out what accessories you will need and purchase them before delivery (e.g., formula pitcher, bottle warmer, etc.).
- Learn how much formula to feed your newborn in the first days and thereafter.
- Print out the formula preparation checklist and learn how to prepare single and multiple bottles of formula.

## REFERENCES

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Don't forget to pick up your copy of the Fed Is Best Book, check out our online resources at [fedisbestbook.org/resources](https://fedisbestbook.org/resources) and sign up for our newsletter to get a notification when our Fed Is Best Safe Infant Feeding Course comes out!

