

## For Dad: *When you're nervous about breastfeeding*



It's not uncommon for men to seem nervous about their partners wanting to breastfeed their babies. Many dads-to-be have doubts and worries about their partner breastfeeding.

Sometimes you might feel excluded or jealous (or afraid that you will feel that way, once your little one arrives). Or you might worry that you can't do as much for the baby as what mom can (no guy likes to feel powerless!). Some men are just unfamiliar with breastfeeding, so they don't grasp the benefits it offers to both moms and babies. And some feel uncomfortable with the idea of their partner breastfeeding in public.

If you notice you are feeling this way, open up about it to your partner. You won't be forced into changing your mind; a conversation is the best way to figure out what's really bothering you.

### **Be sure to stay involved with the experience.**

Having regular conversations with your partner about breastfeeding helps you stay in-the-know and feel more invested in the breastfeeding process. Talk about the basics of breastfeeding together. Breast is best when it comes to feeding your baby—the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding exclusively through six months of age, and then continuing to breastfeed even after solid foods are introduced, until at least 12 months. Let your partner know that you are interested in this information by researching with her, so that she knows you want to be involved in the process as much as possible. Your ongoing support to her may also help her extend the time that she can continue to nurse.

No matter how your conversations and research goes, be sure to attend a breastfeeding class with your partner. Logansport Memorial Hospital offers breastfeeding education classes before giving birth, but our Lactation Consultants can provide ongoing support as you need it after delivery. If you attend this class with your partner, you'll hear firsthand the many benefits of breastfeeding—and all the ways you can support her in doing that.

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### Some things you can do:

- Bring the baby to her when she needs to nurse.
- Help her position the baby for a good latch.
- Bring her a glass of water, a box of tissues, cold compresses, fresh nursing pads, lanolin cream, or anything else you need when you're in the middle of a feeding.
- Change the baby's diapers
- Put the baby to sleep after she's done feeding.
- Prepare meals and snacks for her—she needs to eat well to make milk for the baby.
- Bathe the baby.
- Wear the baby in a sling or a carrier.
- Occasionally feed the baby a bottle, after breastfeeding is established (around 2—4 weeks).

All of these things will help your partner tremendously—but will also help you to feel less left out, so you can establish a close bond with your baby too.

Source: [WhattoExpect.com](http://WhattoExpect.com)

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