BREAST/CHEST FEEDING ASSESSMENT IN THE FIRST 14 DAYS

ALWAYS

- Take a feeding history and assess for risk factors.
- Assess baby's weight, output and behaviour.
- Observation of a feed is essential to evaluate mother/parent and baby.

If < 7% weight loss and appropriate hydration

- Encourage responsive, cue based feeding.
- Support and refer to professional supports and community programs as needed.

If 7–10% weight loss

- Assess for active suck and swallowing at the breast/chest.
- Stimulate milk production with gentle milk expression by hand or with a pump after feeds.
- Top up the baby with parents expressed colostrum or milk.
- Provide frequent follow ups to assess milk production, infant weight and hydration.

If > 10% weight loss

- Assess the baby for signs of dehydration, or infection.
- Evaluate for position, latch, and milk transfer before the provision of supplemental feedings.
- Optimize milk supply while determining the cause of low milk supply, poor feeding, or inadequate milk transfer.
- The priority is to feed the baby — if too sleepy to latch, focus on removing milk from the breasts/chest with expression to stimulate supply, and feeding the baby with expressed milk or a substitute if insufficient milk is available.
- Monitor closely (twice weekly minimum).
- Plans may need to be adapted to protect both parental mental health and infant caloric intake.

FEEDING PRIORITIES

1 FEED THE BABY

(in order of priority)

- At breast/chest
- Parents expressed milk
- Pasteurized donor human milk (PDHM)
- Non-human milk substitute (commercial infant formula)

2 PROTECT THE MILK SUPPLY

- Hand express
- Pump

3 SUPPORT TO BREAST/CHEST FEED

- Effective feeds & milk transfer
- Self-efficacy
- Safe skin-to-skin
- Empowerment
- Normalization

UBC CPD
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FACULTY OF MEDICINE
Empowering continuous learning and practice improvement.

Perinatal Services BC
Provincial Health Services Authority

Produced by the University of British Columbia, Division of Continuing Professional Development.
Proudly funded by Perinatal Services BC. *Revised June 2023.*

Visit **ubccpd.ca/course/breastfeeding-fp** for more info.