

Am I Making Enough Milk? What New Parents Need to Know

For many new moms and dads, one of the biggest worries in the early weeks is whether their baby is getting enough breast milk. The good news: most parents *are* making enough milk, even when it doesn't feel that way. Knowing what signs to look for—and when to ask for help—can ease a lot of stress.

Signs Your Baby Is Getting Enough Milk

Instead of focusing on how your breasts feel or how long a feeding lasts, watch your baby. These are strong signs that breastfeeding is going well:

- Your baby nurses at least **8 times a day**, usually for **10 minutes or more**
- Your breasts feel **softer after feedings**
- By day 5, your baby has **several yellow, seedy stools each day**
- Your baby has **6–8 wet diapers daily**
- Your baby regains their **birth weight by about 2 weeks**

As babies grow, stool patterns can change. Some babies poop after every feeding, while others may go a few days between bowel movements—both can be normal.

Things You *Don't* Need to Worry About

Many common concerns are actually part of normal breastfeeding:

- Breasts feeling less full over time (this means your supply is adjusting)
- Short feedings (some babies eat efficiently!)
- Cluster feeding, especially in the evenings
- Pumping only small amounts of milk (babies are better than pumps)

If your baby is growing well and has enough wet diapers, these signs alone do not mean you have a low milk supply.

What Can Cause Low Milk Supply?

Sometimes, milk supply can be affected by medical or practical issues, including:

- Certain pregnancy or postpartum medications
- Thyroid problems, PCOS, diabetes, or high blood pressure
- Previous breast surgery
- Smoking or alcohol use
- Poor latch or tongue-tie in baby

- Infrequent feeding or pumping
- Supplementing with formula too early or often

If any of these apply, support from a healthcare provider or lactation consultant can make a big difference.

How to Increase Milk Supply

Milk production works on supply and demand—the more often milk is removed, the more your body makes. Helpful strategies include:

- Breastfeed **on demand**, 8–12 times in 24 hours
- Offer **both breasts** at each feeding
- Pump or hand-express after feedings if needed
- Practice **skin-to-skin** contact
- Massage your breasts before and during feedings
- Get enough rest, fluids, and calories
- Reduce stress and accept help from others

Some foods and herbs—like oatmeal, leafy greens, and fenugreek—may help some parents, but it's best to talk with a healthcare professional before trying supplements.

When to Ask for Help

If you're worried about your baby's growth, diaper output, or feeding, don't wait. Lactation consultants, WIC breastfeeding experts, and your baby's doctor are there to help. Many feeding issues can be improved with small adjustments and support.

To contact the Meigs County Health Department WIC Certified Lactation Counselor, call (740) 992-0392 and ask for Sherry Eagle, CLC, WIC Director.

The Bottom Line

Most breastfeeding parents are making enough milk, even when it doesn't feel like it. Trust your baby's signs, take care of yourself, and reach out for help if something doesn't feel right. You're not alone—and you're doing better than you think. 💛

Sherry Eagle



WIC Director