



# *Positioning & Latch-on: Baby-led Latching*

The way you hold your baby and how he latches-on to the breast, are the keys to comfortable feeding for you and full feedings for your baby. Correct positioning and latch-on can prevent many of the common problems mothers encounter when starting to breastfeed.

Baby-led latching is good for the first feeding and for all feedings after that when the baby is awake and willing to participate.

### **Getting comfortable**

Choose a bed or sofa where you can lean back about half way or more, whatever is comfortable for you.

### **Positioning your baby**

Position the baby between your breasts and allow your baby to wake skin-to-skin. Holding your newborn skin-to-skin is one of the best ways to make breastfeeding easy!

### **Be Patient**

Your baby will gradually realize where he is and that food is nearby! He will slowly begin to move towards the breast. Provide support and assist a bit if it seems necessary, but avoid directing the baby. Your baby will locate the nipple and latch-on with minimal assistance from you. Let your baby lead the way.



This baby located the breast and latched on independently



## Importance of Skin to Skin contact

Babies tend to feed best when they have direct contact with mother, in skin-to-skin contact. Not only does it keep baby warm, the smells and feel of the breast encourage the baby to locate the breast and begin feeding.

## Mix & Match Techniques

You may find that the sandwich hold would help your baby get a deeper latch-on the breast. Place thumb near the baby's nose and fingers on the opposite side of the breast, and gently compress the breast into a "sandwich". Listen for swallows to assure that your baby is drinking milk.

Feel free to use any of the Mother-led Latching techniques from the handout "Mother-led Latching" if they seem to work better at the time.

If you find breastfeeding painful or your baby is not gaining weight (2/3 to 1 oz per day), please seek the help of a lactation consultant to give you personalized guidance.

Although breastfeeding is natural, it is a learning process for both you and your baby. Allow yourself several weeks to perfect these techniques.

At any time that you are unsure that you are feeding correctly, seek the help of a lactation consultant or other knowledgeable health care provider. Once breastfeeding is fully established, it can be one of the most rewarding experiences of new motherhood.



Sandwich hold