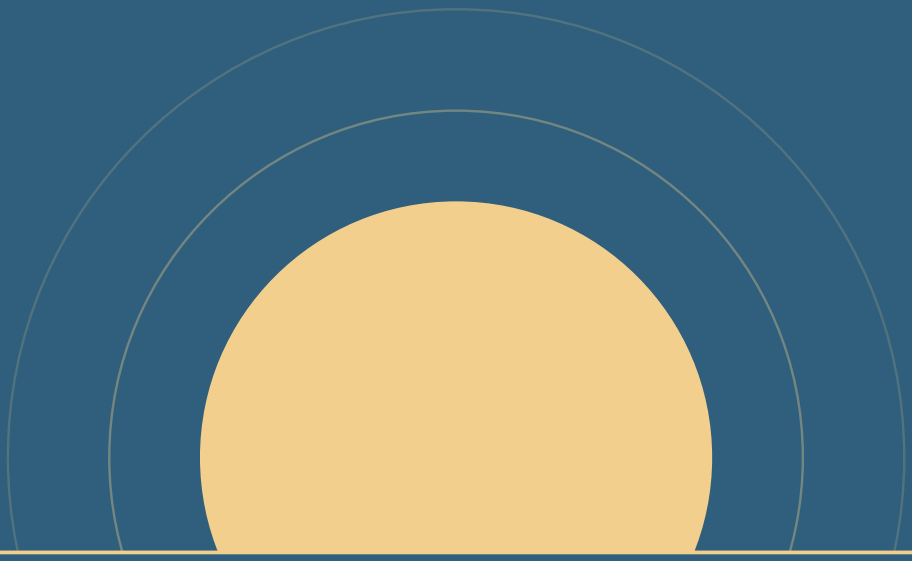
Mamavela

The Breastfeeding Handbook

Latch, signs of enough milk, sore nipples, pumping, storage and work rights, step by step, with a 7-day feeding log.



Free sample

For the personal use of the buyer and their family; sharing or reselling is not allowed. This book informs and does not replace medical advice. Questions: administration@lacangel.fr

Contents

Welcome 3

- What this book is, and what it is not 3
- US and UK: same milk, different words 3
- How to use this book 4

Chapter 1. Why breastfeed, and for how long 5

- What the official recommendations say 5
- What breastfeeding does for your baby 5
- What breastfeeding does for you 6
- Without guilt, in both directions 6
- Your own breastfeeding goal 6

Welcome

If you are reading this with a baby on your chest, one hand on your phone, at an hour you would rather not look at: welcome. You are in exactly the right place. Breastfeeding is often described as natural, and it is, but natural does not mean automatic. It is a skill that you and your baby learn together, sometimes quickly, sometimes over several weeks, and very often with a little help. The NHS puts it simply: "Breastfeeding is a skill that you and your baby learn together, and it can take time to get used to."

This handbook is here to make that learning calmer. It gathers in one place what the main public health bodies of the United States and the United Kingdom say about breastfeeding, from the first feed to the last one, and turns it into steps, tables, checklists and pages you can fill in. Every figure in these pages comes from a named source, listed at the end with its full web address and the date it was checked.

What this book is, and what it is not

This book is information, not medical advice. It cannot watch your baby feed, it cannot look at your breasts, it does not know your history, and it never replaces your midwife, your obstetrician, your family doctor (GP), your health visitor, your pediatrician or a lactation consultant. When something worries you, the right move is always to ask one of them. You will read that sentence many times in these pages, on purpose.

You will not find any medicine names with doses, any supplement recommendations, any herbal "milk boosters" or any promise that breastfeeding will go smoothly. You will find what usually happens, the warning signs and numbers to call, storage rules, your rights at work and a gentle plan for weaning.

> **Every way of feeding a baby counts.**
>
> Exclusive breastfeeding, breastfeeding with some formula, pumping and bottle-feeding your own milk, donor milk, formula only: each is a real way of loving and nourishing a child. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) says it plainly: "There is no 'right' or 'wrong' choice", and "babies can thrive on breast milk, infant formula or a combination of the two." This book is for anyone who wants to breastfeed, for as long or as short a time as they choose, and it ends with a chapter for the day you stop.

US and UK: same milk, different words

You may hear (US)	You may hear (UK)	What it means
Lactation consultant, IBCLC	Infant feeding specialist, lactation consultant, IBCLC	A specialist in breastfeeding problems

You may hear (US)	You may hear (UK)	What it means
Pediatrician	Health visitor, GP	Your baby's routine care and weight checks
OB-GYN, nurse-midwife	Midwife, GP	The professionals looking after your recovery
Diaper	Nappy	Same thing, same counts in this book
Pacifier	Dummy	Same thing
911	999 (or 112)	Emergency number
Your doctor's after-hours line	NHS 111	Urgent advice when it is not an emergency

How to use this book

You do not have to read it in order. If you are pregnant, read Chapters 1 to 4 and Chapter 12 (for your partner) before the birth, and fill in the contact page in Chapter 15. If your baby is here and feeds are painful, go straight to Chapters 3 and 6. If you are worried your baby is not getting enough, Chapter 4 has day-by-day signs and a seven-day log. If you are going back to work, Chapters 8 and 9 are yours.

> A note on words. Health bodies say "mother", "mom", "mum", "breastfeeding parent"; the AAP notes that some people prefer "chestfeeding". We mostly say "you". Whatever your family looks like, solo mom, two moms, co-parents, adoptive parents, this book is for you.

Chapter 1. Why breastfeed, and for how long

What the official recommendations say

The three bodies quoted most often in this book agree on the broad shape.

- **World Health Organization (WHO):** "WHO and UNICEF recommend all infants initiate breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth, breastfeed exclusively (are fed only breast milk) for the first 6 months of life and then continue breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond while nutritionally adequate, safe complementary (solid) foods are introduced from six months."
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):** the AAP "recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about the first six months if possible" and supports "continued breastfeeding after solid foods are introduced as long as you and your baby desire, for 2 years or beyond." Its 2022 policy statement (Meek and Noble, see the bibliography) adds that these recommendations "are consistent with those of the World Health Organization."
- **NHS:** "Exclusive breastfeeding (breast milk only) is recommended for around the first 6 months of your baby's life", and "Breastfeeding into your baby's 2nd year or beyond, alongside other foods, is ideal." The NHS also says: "You and your baby can carry on enjoying the benefits of breastfeeding for as long as you like."

Notice the words: "if possible", "as long as you and your baby desire", "for as long as you like". These are public health goals for whole populations, not a test you pass or fail.

What breastfeeding does for your baby

The NHS lists the ways breastfeeding helps reduce a baby's risk of:

- infections, with fewer visits to hospital as a result
- diarrhoea and vomiting, with fewer visits to hospital as a result
- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- obesity

It adds a sentence worth keeping: "Any amount of breast milk has a positive effect. The longer you breastfeed, the longer the protection lasts and the greater the benefits."

The AAP explains that breast milk helps build a baby's immune system and that "studies link breastfeeding with healthy brain development and higher intelligence scores." The largest review on the subject, the 2016 Lancet series led by Cesar Victora, found in its meta-analyses "protection against child infections and malocclusion, increases in intelligence, and probable reductions in overweight and diabetes." The same review is honest about what it did not find: no association

"with allergic disorders such as asthma or with blood pressure or cholesterol", and "an increase in tooth decay with longer periods of breastfeeding". Good evidence is like that: clear where it is clear, careful where it is not.

What breastfeeding does for you

According to the NHS, breastfeeding lowers your risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes, and "the more you breastfeed, the greater the benefits." The WHO adds that longer breastfeeding "reduces the risk of ovarian and breast cancer" and that exclusive breastfeeding of an infant under six months "causes hormonal changes that can delay the return of fertility". The AAP notes that breastfeeding "helps return the uterus to its pre-pregnancy size more quickly than formula feeding."

Without guilt, in both directions

Many parents feel pressure from every side: pressure to breastfeed, and pressure to stop. The AAP recognises that "many families face challenges that make it difficult to meet their breastfeeding goals", which is why "practical support and encouragement is so important." It also says: "We understand that some parents will not be able to breastfeed. For these families, infant formula is a safe, nutritious choice."

> **Is this normal? Feeling unsure about breastfeeding**
>
> Yes. The NHS says you "do not have to make up your mind until your baby is born." Many parents decide to try the first feed and see. If you are not sure, the first feed commits you to nothing; it simply gives your baby colostrum and gives you information.

Your own breastfeeding goal

Write down what you hope for, gently. It can change at any time.

- ☐ I would like to try breastfeeding and see how it goes
- ☐ I would like to breastfeed exclusively for the first weeks, then decide
- ☐ I would like to breastfeed for around six months
- ☐ I would like to combine breast milk and formula from the start
- ☐ I would like to pump and feed my milk by bottle

My goal for now, in my own words:

What would help me most to reach it:

End of the sample

Thank you for reading this far. We hope these first pages already feel useful, and that you can see how the rest of the book is built: clear steps, pages to fill in, sources you can check.

The full book has 53 pages.

Get it here: https://mamavela.com/shop/breastfeeding-handbook/

One-time payment, instant PDF.