

**Breastfeeding when out and about..**



In the early days of feeding, you may find that, as with any new skill, you need to concentrate on getting baby's attachment right, and you may find things easier in a certain chair, a certain position, or with a certain combination of cushions. You may wonder how you will ever get out of the house!

Babies need to feed frequently, and in the early days it is probably helpful for your own recovery from the birth, and bonding with your new family to be kept fairly close to home (and bed!) by baby's incessant feeding needs. Call it a 'Baby-moon' – make yourself a lovely sanctuary to hide out in, and enjoy it!

At some point however, you are going to want to get out and about, and that may feel a little daunting! Don't worry. It's normal to feel overwhelmed. Take it one small step at a time, and you'll soon find it second nature.

**Top tips**

- **Don't rush yourself. Breastfeeding is a learned art, both for you and for baby. Some mothers, and some babies take longer than others to get the hang of it, so even if you feel you will NEVER manage to leave the house without that certain cushion..you will! (Either that, or you'll adapt and wedge your nappy bag under baby instead!)**
- Breastfeeding-friendly clothing – This can take a bit of experimentation to get used to! Purpose-made clothing is great. Easy access is key, and will be helped by a good nursing bra (which will also ensure you are comfortable). Equally easy really, is to wear loose-fitting tops that baby can easily access from underneath. Some Mums feel self-conscious (or cold!) with part of their belly showing, but you can get around this by wearing a 'boob tube' or scarf around your waist if you want to. Baby accessing your breast from under your top tends to make your breasts feel more covered, but it's as easy for baby with any button down/front opening dress or top.

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■ **Some Mothers like to carry a muslin cloth or shawl with them to help cover up. This tends to just give you one extra thing to juggle, and to make the whole thing more obvious than discreetly feeding – especially if your baby is more interested in peeping out than staying hidden! If you're uncomfortable about showing too much skin, the 'under the T-shirt' method is probably easiest.**

- **Slings/baby carriers** – some slings (\* link) are quite adaptable so you can breastfeed easily. You may feel this is a comfy, discreet way to feed (especially when you are on the bus or walking round the supermarket!).
- **Start small** – plan to meet another breastfeeding Mum for a coffee in a place you know to be friendly, or plan a visit with a group of Mums to your local shopping centre, or day trip. There's always 'safety in numbers' and it will help you feel more confident if you are among other women doing the same. Once you've done that, you'll find you are more comfortable out by yourselves.
- **Relax!** – Babies can sense tension, so keep calm and carry on.
- **Know Your Rights** – The right a woman has to feed her baby anywhere where she herself has a right to be is now enshrined in the Equality Act (2010). You are unlikely to suffer discrimination, but sadly it can sometimes still happen. Be educated about your rights ([maternityaction.org](http://maternityaction.org)) and be sure to complain if the situation does arise.

Mostly you will find that people are pleased, excited and supportive when they see a mother feeding her baby. You can also remember that you are doing a service for other women who may have felt too timid to feed their baby outside the house until they saw you! Breastfeeding is about nourishment, bonding, and providing the best start possible for your baby. Be proud, stay cool, and breastfeed with confidence.

Notes Section