



Basics of Positioning for Breastfeeding

General Tips

- Mom's Positioning
 - Mom should be comfortable.
 - Mom's shoulders should be relaxed. (Many new moms will hunch their shoulders while trying to position & latch baby. Uncomfortable!)
 - Use pillows (as many as needed/desired) to keep baby supported at mom's breast – mom should not be hunching over, slouching, or otherwise contorting herself (unless this is part of her desired position).
 - Bring baby up to the breast, rather than leaning towards baby or chasing baby's mouth around with the breast.

- Baby's Positioning
 - Baby should also be comfortable & feel supported.
 - Think good posture – head in line with shoulders in line with hips.
 - Baby should be held closely against mom and turned fully towards her (i.e., belly-to-belly).
 - Baby should not have to turn her head to latch on.
 - Position baby so that her nose is in line with the nipple.
 - When she latches, she will tilt her head back & open her mouth really wide before taking the breast with her mouth. Nipple-to-nose positioning helps baby get a deep latch more effectively.
 - Allow baby to have freedom of movement with her head.
 - Mom supports baby's head and neck, but baby is still able to unlatch herself as needed/desired.

Common Positions

- Cradle Hold
 - Mom is usually seated.
 - Mom holds baby across her body, while supporting baby's head with her forearm.
 - If baby is at the left breast, mom uses her left forearm and vice versa.

- Cross cradle (or modified cradle) Hold
 - Mom is usually seated.



- Mom holds baby across her body, while supporting baby's head & body with her opposite arm/hand.
 - If baby is at the left breast, mom uses her right arm/hand and vice versa.
- Football Hold
 - Mom is sitting upright.
 - Mom positions baby at her side, with baby turned towards mom.
 - Use pillows vertically behind mom to give baby enough room for her legs.
 - Use pillows to help support baby at the level of mom's breast.
 - Mom uses her arm/hand to support baby's head & body.
 - If baby is at the right breast, mom uses her right arm/hand and vice versa.
 - Great position for twins when attempting to feed at the same time, although it may take an extra set of hands to achieve in the early days.
- Side-lying Position
 - Mom lays on her side in a comfortable position – if desired, use pillows to support her head, back, between her legs, etc.
 - Baby lays next to mom, who supports baby with her free arm/hand.
 - Mom may try tucking baby's bottom arm under her breast to help baby stay in position.
- Laid-back Breastfeeding (AKA Biological Nurturing)
 - The most “unstructured” position of these listed.
 - Allows baby to more fully use their feeding instincts to achieve a deep latch & successful feeding.
 - Mom finds a comfortable, reclined position.
 - Baby is positioned along mom's body and facing her.
 - Baby's support is provided mostly by mom's body, but mom can use her arm(s) to offer additional support.

Remember: When you feel comfortable doing so, experiment with as many positions as you want to! These positions are merely the most common – a good position for breastfeeding is any one in which mom & baby are comfortable and baby is eating. Don't be afraid to branch out!

The information provided is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting with a qualified healthcare provider. If you or your baby is experiencing a medical problem, you should contact a qualified health care provider.