

Dinner for Two and More ...

Twins and triplets mostly arrive somewhat earlier and weigh less. For these babies especially, the growth and immune factors contained in mother's milk are particularly valuable. But can you even breastfeed twins? In the vast majority of cases, yes! Even if the babies only get part of their nutrition from their mother's breast, both mother and babies profit from it. Nevertheless, breastfeeding twins or other multiples is a challenge for which you should prepare yourself ahead of time.

Being well-prepared is half the battle

Caring for two or more children is a task that will keep you busy around the clock in the next few years. Make sure you arrange for appropriate help and support from people around you for the first few weeks of your babies' lives. Hand over as many household tasks and as much child care for older siblings as possible to other people. Support from the father is especially valuable. Every little bit of help, such as bringing the babies to you, offering a helping hand with putting the babies to breast, calming and burping them, looking after the children or cleaning the pump part, gives the mother valuable time and space to breastfeed, cuddle and rest. Seek out contact with other parents of twins and appropriately trained professionals early in the pregnancy so you can get information on breastfeeding and your babies' nutrition that is especially relevant to your situation.



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* International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) are specialists for all breastfeeding matters!

Getting started

- › Be prepared for the fact that building up a good breastfeeding relationship takes a lot of time in the first few days and weeks. You'll get this time back two- and three-fold when breastfeeding is well-established-Skin-to-skin contact as soon as possible after the birth promotes bonding and breastfeeding. This can be done with each baby individually or together.
- › Early and frequent breastfeeding promotes good development of milk production. Later "demand determines supply" still applies.
- › In any case, you should see to it that the newborns receive colostrum
- › If the babies are not yet ready to suck at the breast, begin breast massage and frequent pumping with an effective double pump set as soon after the birth as possible, to build up the milk supply. If only one baby is ready to breastfeed, then further stimulate the milk production with additional pumping
- › Frequently, twins have very different breastfeeding behavior. Don't be too concerned about that, but rather try to respond to the needs and individual characteristics of each baby.
- › Let trained professionals support you with initiating breastfeeding and building up appropriate milk production.

Breastfeed together or one at a time?

This is a matter of personal preference. For many mothers of twins, it is easier at the beginning to breastfeed each baby individually. The mothers often enjoy being better able to get familiar with the characteristics of each baby while breastfeeding individually.

Breastfeeding them together saves time. Possibly the baby who suckles more strongly can stimulate the milk ejection reflex for the weaker sibling. At night, breastfeeding them together allows the mother a longer break to sleep and the babies don't have to wait until the sibling has finished feeding.

The Significance of Breastfeeding after Multiple Births:

- › Early and frequent feeding promotes the involution of your uterus, overstretched from the multiple pregnancy
- › Mothers who are breastfeeding more than one child at the same time have extremely high hormonal levels. These breastfeeding hormones make you more persistent, more patient and less vulnerable to infection and depression.
- › Mother's milk has antibodies which support the immune function of the babies and thus protects them against infections. Healthy intestinal flora is established quickly and effectively in breastfed children.
- › A lot of cuddling time results from breastfeeding, which promotes mother-child bonding.
- › Once breastfeeding is established, it saves time and money



Breastfed twins in Double Football Hold © Hemmelmayr



Breastfed twins in Parallel Position © Fischerlehner



Breastfed twins in Criss-Cross © Fischerlehner