

Breastfeeding Myth #5

"I had to supplement until my milk came in since it took five days."

Your breasts already produce colostrum before your baby is even born, and it is all you need! Here's a little lesson in the newborn's stomach, via the [Le Leche League](#):

When mothers hear that colostrum is measurable in teaspoons rather than ounces, they often wonder if that can really be enough for their babies. The short answer is that colostrum is the only food healthy, full-term babies need. The following is an explanation:

A 1 day old baby's stomach capacity is about 5-7 ml, or about the size of a marble. Interestingly, researchers have found that the day-old newborn's stomach does not stretch to hold more. Since the walls of the newborn's stomach stays firm, extra milk is most often expelled (spit up). Your colostrum is just the right amount for your baby's first feedings!

By day 3, the newborn's stomach capacity has grown to about 0.75-1 oz, or about the size of a "shooter" marble. Small, frequent feedings assure that your baby takes in all the milk he needs.

Around day 7, the newborn's stomach capacity is now about 1.5-2 oz, or about the size of a ping-pong ball. Continued frequent feeding will assure that your baby takes in all the milk he needs, and your milk production meets his demands.



So you see, newborn babies barely need to eat anything at all and giving them more than their tiny tummies can handle only makes them vomit. As everyone knows, breastfeeding is supply and demand -- if you supplement in the first days of life, you're already telling your breasts to make less milk so when your milk DOES come in (which takes an average of 3-5 days!), you will have less because you supplemented. Trust that your body can make enough milk in the first week of life, and plan on keeping your baby on you pretty much all day and the majority of the night -- it's perfectly normal for a newborn to nurse for 12 times in one day, sometimes 40-50 minutes apart -- that is not a sign of a lack of milk.