

Breastfeeding a Second Child: Ten Reasons to Try It Again

Breast milk, with all of its amazing benefits and nutritional excellence, is clearly the best food you can give your baby. It contains perfectly balanced nutrition, is easily digested, and provides your baby with antibodies that make his immune system stronger. Breastfeeding involves more than just feeding your baby milk though. It is a physical and emotional process. When it goes well, most moms enjoy the cuddling and closeness that comes with nursing. However, when breastfeeding is difficult, moms may walk away from the experience scared to try it again. The good news is that breastfeeding is usually easier the second time around. Here are ten reasons to try breastfeeding again.

1) You know what to expect

Remember the first time you tried to nurse your baby? You may have had 2 or 3 nurses' hands touching your breasts and telling you what you should do; or on the other hand, you may have had no help at all and not a clue what you should be doing. The first time you nurse a baby it's all new to you. You don't know what to expect and you don't know how you or your baby will do with it. By the time you have your second baby though, you will have had at least a little practice. You'll know what you had problems with in the past and be more prepared to deal with challenges.

2) Breastfeeding is usually less painful the second time around

Breastfeeding should not be painful but most new moms experience nipple soreness during the first week or two of breastfeeding. It takes some time for your nipples to get used to the frequent and vigorous sucking that your baby does. It also may take your baby time to figure out how to latch and suck properly. Women sometimes quit before they give their bodies and their babies time to figure it all out. Nipple soreness is generally better with a second baby. In fact, many moms who had nipple pain or soreness with their first, report having no pain at all with their second. If they do have pain, this soreness normally goes away within a week or two.

3) Second-time moms may make more milk

One of the biggest reasons new moms give up on breastfeeding is because they believe they are not making enough milk. Research has found that there is good reason to give breastfeeding another try, even if you had a low milk supply with your first. A study published in the medical journal *The Lancet* found that women produced considerably more milk with their second babies than they did with their first, and moms that had significant supply

issues with their first showed the most improvement in supply with their second. Other studies have shown that mom's milk generally comes in faster with the second baby.

4) You know what's normal for you

When you breastfed your first you may have taken a breastfeeding class or read a book on breastfeeding, but you really couldn't know exactly what it would be like for you until you actually started breastfeeding. You may have expected to nurse every four hours but found your breasts performed better when emptied every two hours or you may have had an oversupply with your first baby and found your breasts needed to be a little less stimulated. Either way, having done this before will give you a better idea of how your breasts work and what's normal for you.

5) You're more relaxed

Breastfeeding is supposed to feel natural, but for many new moms their first experiences with breastfeeding are quite the opposite. Trying to get a screaming or hungry baby to latch on when you are tired and frustrated yourself can be stressful and overwhelming. Of course, being frustrated will only make it more difficult to relax. When you're not relaxed, your milk may not let down, which in turn leads to more frustration and stress. This circle of frustration is what can lead moms to throw in the towel. With the second baby, however, most moms are more relaxed in general and less worried about doing everything perfectly. This new liberated attitude makes it easier to stay calm when giving breastfeeding a second chance.

6) You're more assertive

Some moms are naturally assertive, but even women that generally have no problem telling people what they think may lack self-confidence when it comes to breastfeeding. It's easy to let granny Gertrude, whose kids never breastfed, or your neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Old School, or even worse, Dr. Formula Pusher, make you second guess yourself. Second-time moms are usually more assertive, knowing how to pick their battles, but also knowing when it's time to speak up about how they feed their babies.

7) Nursing around people is easier

Back when you breastfed your first, breastfeeding may have been awkward and nursing in public may have been out of the question. Now that you've "been there done that," feeding your little one with people around should be a little easier. You hopefully have learned a few tricks for nursing discretely and no longer care what people think about when and where you feed your baby. You aren't going to allow yourself to be stuck in the house 24/7 just to avoid breastfeeding in public challenges this time around.

8) You've worked through the guilt issues

Seventy-five percent of new moms try breastfeeding. Moms often go into it with determination and confidence, feeling certain that they won't be one of those moms that only breastfeed for a little while and quit. But, when breastfeeding doesn't go the way they envisioned it and they become one of "those moms," they may feel an immense amount of guilt. Even moms who planned to wean to formula early on, sometimes deal with guilt issues. When you breastfeed it's important to go easy on yourself. Working through the guilt-baggage you had with your first will make you a happier, wiser, and more compassionate breastfeeding mom.

9) You won't have regrets or second thoughts

You may be going back and forth on the idea of breastfeeding again. If your first breastfeeding experience was a bad one, you may have resolved that you just don't want to go through that again. Understandable, but what if breastfeeding was different this time around and it was everything you had wanted the first time you gave it a try? You'll never know if you don't try. You really have nothing to lose. If you give it a shot, you'll never have to ask yourself "what if?"

10) All the reasons you tried it the first time

And, the biggest reason to try breastfeeding again? All the reasons you wanted to breastfeed the first time. Breastfeeding is the best nutrition for your baby; protects your baby from illnesses and infections; may prevent diabetes, allergies, SIDS, and cancer; may boost your baby's IQ; may help you to lose weight; is easier on your baby's digestive system; and it's free!

Resource:

<https://www.justmommies.com/babies/breastfeeding-second-child-ten-reasons-to-try-it-again#breastfeeding-a-second-child-ten-reasons-to-try-it-again>

Video: <http://www.echominnesota.org/library/breastfeeding-your-baby>