Breastfeeding: and Ramadan

breastfeeding.asn.au
The Australian Breastfeeding Association has the following information for breastfeeding mothers who are planning to fast for Ramadan.

Women have been fasting while breastfeeding their babies for many generations without harm to themselves, or their babies.

If you know someone in your community who has breastfed and fasted in the past, you may like to ask them about their experiences.

If you have any concerns about your health or your baby’s health prior to Ramadan seek medical advice before beginning the fast.
Your milk supply

Fasting is unlikely to reduce your milk supply. Here are some tips to make breastfeeding easier during Ramadan:

- Drink plenty of fluid before fasting each day — dehydration can reduce your milk supply^1
- Eat energy rich food between Iftar and Sahar^1
- Breastfeed your baby every time they show they are hungry — this will help your baby get all the milk they need
- Rest when you can
- Avoid overheating

How to know if baby is getting enough milk:

- Your baby has at least 5 heavily wet nappies in 24 hours
- Your baby’s urine is clear and odourless
- Your baby poos regularly and it is soft or runny
- Your baby has good skin tone and colour
- Your baby is generally content and alert
- Your baby is growing well and gaining weight.

If you are worried about your milk supply while fasting, you can get advice from a child health nurse or a GP.
Fasting and your baby

Some women wonder if fasting will change the quality of their milk, but breastfeeding research shows that your milk still contains everything your baby needs while you fast\(^2\).

Research has found that breastfed babies whose mothers fasted for Ramadan still grew normally, both during and in the months after Ramadan\(^1\).

If your baby seems fussier than usual while you are fasting, you can check if baby is getting enough milk.

If this is normal, there could be other reasons why your baby is fussing.

Your baby could be unwell, teething or going through a normal developmental phase.

Some babies may be fussy because of the change in their normal routine.

For more information see our article on Religious Fasting

breastfeeding.asn.au/fasting

References


The Australian Breastfeeding Association is Australia’s largest breastfeeding information and support service. We have been supporting women to breastfeed since 1964.
Every mother needs the shoulder of a more experienced mother to lean on.

- Mary Paton AM, Founder