

# Jaundice

Jaundice usually lasts for a short period of time and is generally harmless. For example, mild jaundice may appear during the first week after birth and clear up on its own within a few days. Although jaundice in newborns is normal, it is very important that you involve your baby's health care provider in monitoring the situation and decreasing the amount of bilirubin. Blood tests and phototherapy (treatment with a special light) may be necessary.

## Look for These Symptoms:

- Yellowish skin and eyes
- Sleepy
- Loss of appetite

## Prevention:

- Breastfeed as soon as possible after birth.
- Breastfeed on demand, at least 8-12 times in a 24-hour period.
- Do not use supplements unless directed by your health care provider.

Sometimes your health care provider may recommend supplementing with formula to lower bilirubin levels. In most cases, breastfeeding should not be stopped, but should continue with formula supplementation. Some health care providers will encourage supplementation with your own expressed breastmilk to lower bilirubin levels. Check with your health care provider about their protocol for your baby. Call the **24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline, 1-800-833-4642** if you have additional questions.

## Treatment:

- Continue to breastfeed often, 8-12 times in a 24-hour period.
- Most cases clear up with adequate breastmilk.
- Breastmilk stimulates bowel movements, which will clear excess bilirubin from the baby's body.
- Phototherapy may be used to help break down the bilirubin.

Visit [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) to learn more about jaundice.

Information Adapted from New York State Department of Health, [breastfeedingpartners.org](http://breastfeedingpartners.org)



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