

Taking Care of You

Disclaimer: It is our goal to use gender inclusive language when possible. Please know that all references to breastfeeding are inclusive of all breastfeeding, nursing, chestfeeding, and human milk feeding individuals.



Lactation Landmark

Congratulations on your breastfeeding journey! Whether you're latching, pumping, or combination feeding, we celebrate all forms of breastfeeding

- Human Milk changes to fit your child's needs as they grow. The World Health Organization and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend breastfeeding for up to 2 years of age, or beyond.
- Changes in nursing frequency may impact your mood and supply. For more information, talk to your WIC Counselor, visit the [AZ WIC Breastfeeding website](#) or call our 24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-800-833-4642.
- Breastfeeding may lower stress hormones. However, if you are struggling with mood or anxiety distress, it's ok to ask for help.
- Many medications used to support mental health may be safe to take while breastfeeding and are likely safer than going untreated. For reliable information visit [LactMed](#), call the 24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline, and/or consult your healthcare provider.

Emotional Wellbeing

No one can pour from an empty cup. Taking care of yourself helps you take care of your family.

- Social support can protect against mood distress. Invite people into your life to share the mental and physical load.
 - Visit the [4th Trimester of AZ](#) to find virtual and in-person community gatherings.
- Make time for yourself. No one is expected to be with their children 24 hours a day. Ask someone you trust to watch your child or prioritize self-care while they sleep. Call a friend, exercise, read a book, journal, or watch your favorite show. Do something for yourself! Cleaning or completing a to-do list does not count as self-care
- Sleeping is one of the most important ways to improve your mental health. Every extra minute of sleep helps!
- Ask for help if you have concerns or feel overwhelmed. [PSI Arizona](#) offers free, virtual support groups to help support you and your unique challenges.

You are not alone, as many as 1 in 5 mothers experience postpartum mood and anxiety disorders. Even after 6 months postpartum, some women still don't feel like themselves. Help is available, and there is no reason to continue to suffer.

**Call or text the Maternal Mental Health Hotline at
1-833-TLC-MAMA
(1-833-852-6262)**

Nutrition

Feeding yourself is just as important as feeding your baby.

- Enjoy a variety of foods from each food group that nourish your body and make you feel good. Visit [MyPlate](#) and [AZ Health Zone](#) for new recipes and tips!
- Your body feels best when it is hydrated, and nursing parents need additional fluids. Choose water throughout the day!
- Stretch your food dollars. WIC benefits can be used with other nutrition assistance programs. Visit the [Arizona Department of Economic Security](#) for more information.

Folic Acid

Folic acid helps your baby's brain and is important to take before, during, and after pregnancy to prevent birth defects.

- Find it in dark green, leafy vegetables (folate) as well as in vitamins (folic acid).
- To receive your free supplement, visit the [PowerMe A2Z website](#).

Family Planning

Your body and mind need time to recover after pregnancy. It is recommended that you wait at least 18 months before getting pregnant again.

- Many methods of birth control can be used while breastfeeding. Contact your Healthcare Provider for more information.
 - If you choose oral contraceptives, you can now receive them without a prescription from many pharmacies.
 - For some women, hormonal birth control may impact their mood. If you notice any changes, speak to your provider about other options

Family Life

There are new things to learn at every stage of motherhood. Resources are available to support you along the way.

- Vaccines keep you and your family healthy. Financial support may be available through the [Vaccines for Children program](#).
- [Head Start and Early Head Start](#) offer no-cost early education programs for eligible children ages 0-5. Visit the [DES website](#) for help with other childcare costs.
- [Strong Families AZ](#) offers classes and resources for first-time mothers, fathers, and families with young children ages zero to five.
- If you are feeling unsafe in your relationship or at home, visit the [ACESDV website](#) for compassionate information and support regarding domestic or sexual violence.

More to Consider

To help your family stay safe, avoid using alcohol, tobacco, and illicit substances, and take your medications as prescribed.

- For Substance Abuse Treatment and Resources
 - Visit the [Arizona Treatment Locator](#)
 - Arizona Opioid Assistance and Referral Line 1-888-688-4222
 - SAMHSA Helpline 1-800-662-4357
- Thinking about quitting smoking or vaping? Call the ASHLINE at 1-800-556-6222

