



Australian
Breastfeeding
Association



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 supply¹
- Eat energy rich food between Iftar and Sahar¹
- 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 fast².

Research has found that breastfed babies whose mothers fasted for Ramadan still grew normally, both during and in the months after Ramadan¹.

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

1. Haratipour, H., Sohrabi, M. B., Ghasemi, E., Karimi, A., Zolfaghari, P., & Yahyaei, E. (2013). Impact of maternal fasting during Ramadan on growth parameters of exclusively breastfed infants in Shahroud, 2012. *Journal of Fasting and Health*, 1(2), 66-69.
2. Bener, A., Galadari, S., Gillett, M., Osman, N., Al-Taneiji, H., Al-Kuwaiti, M. H. H., & Al-Sabosy, M. M. A. (2001). Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan does not change the composition of breast milk. *Nutrition Research*, 21(6), 859-864.



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Breastfeeding Helpline **1800 mum 2 mum**

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The Australian Breastfeeding Association is Australia's largest breastfeeding information and support service. We have been supporting women to breastfeed since 1964.



TRANSLATING
AND
INTERPRETING
SERVICE

You can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (131 450) to call the National Breastfeeding Helpline. Both of these services are free.

NATIONAL OFFICE

Phone: 03 9690 4620

Postal: PO Box 33221,
Melbourne VIC 3004

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150 Albert Road,
South Melbourne VIC 3205

breastfeeding.asn.au
breastfeeding.asn.au/membership

*Every mother needs the shoulder
of a more experienced mother to
lean on.*

- Mary Paton AM, Founder



The National Breastfeeding Helpline is supported
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