



# CLS

The Corporate Lactation Services  
Newsletter

## *In this issue:*

---

Finding Your Groove

Infant Sleep

Developmental Milestones

Breastfeeding Behavior

## 6 WEEK MILESTONES

by Laurie Wheeler, RN, IBCLC, May 2017

The 6 weeks milestone is often when a mother feels she finally knows her baby's patterns and signals. Mother and baby feel more "in sync" with each other. Some mothers put it this way: "We've found our groove."

# FINDING YOUR GROOVE

Here's what you can expect around this time.:

Your baby may go through growth spurts (also called frequency days) where baby will want to breastfeed more often than usual for a few days. The “six weeks growth spurt” is reported by many mothers. Your baby may drain the breast much more quickly than in the past, finishing a side in just a few minutes.

Stool patterns may change and baby may go less often, but the bowel movements and the tummy are still soft. Some babies have one big “mudslide” every few days. If stools are hard like pellets or gravel, this means constipation and the baby’s doctor should be consulted.

*Your baby may now be sleeping longer stretches.*

Your breasts usually have adjusted by now to synchronize with your baby's feeding patterns. So, they may feel softer than you have been used to. This is a normal change. However, your baby should still be feeding well, content afterwards, wetting plenty of diapers, growing and gaining weight.

Pediatrician appointments are further apart now, often every 2 months. If you have any concerns about your baby’s health or growth, be sure to call or visit the baby’s doctor immediately.



## INFANT SLEEP - A BIG CONVERSATION POINT!

Infant sleep is a subject “up for discussion,” with so many opinions, books, and programs out there! Babies’ sleep patterns are quite variable and babies that start sleeping longer, often begin waking again. This can occur with each new physical or mental developmental milestone!

There is sound scientific research on infant sleep. The leaders in this field are Helen Ball (United Kingdom) [www.isisonline.org](http://www.isisonline.org) and James McKenna (USA)

<http://cosleeping.nd.edu> . A great read is Sweet Sleep - Nighttime and Naptime Strategies for the Breastfeeding Family, through La Leche League International.

It can be difficult to wake up every 2 or 3 hours to feed, but it can be normal for the baby. Try to find a sleeping arrangement that is safe and works for the family, and allows you and baby to get back to sleep quickly.



Have you seen the sidecar arrangements? There are many commercial products. Some can be easily made, if a family member or friend is handy. Some parents drop the crib side rail down and move it next to mother's side of the bed.

Safety is paramount! The American Academy of Pediatrics has safe sleep guidelines (see [aap.org](http://aap.org)). Also, talk to your pediatrician to get his/her opinion on sleep arrangements.

## GETTING BACK INTO THE SWING OF THINGS

You may be returning to work or starting to save milk for work or outings. Introduction of a bottle often goes along with this. It seems to be the consensus among mothers, pediatricians, and lactation consultants that there is a “window of opportunity” for introducing the bottle. If too soon, the baby may begin having latch issues or breast refusal. If too late, feeding by bottle becomes a battle. The window of opportunity seems to be between 3 and 8 weeks of age.

You may have recently started or are about to start a contraceptive method. Certain hormonal methods can decrease milk production. Talk to your doctor about breastfeeding-compatible options, and note when you started the method on your calendar. Monitor any changes that occur after that.

Be aware that the combination of returning to work, longer sleep stretches, and hormonal contraceptives can come together to decrease an otherwise robust milk supply. Be watchful of this, continue to feed on cue, express some extra milk, and don't wait to contact your lactation consultant if you have concerns about this.

## COPING – SOME IDEAS

Babies are often more unsettled in the evening and early nighttime hours, before finally settling in for a sleep. Try to keep this part of the day calm and quiet. If you can, plan for simple meals and clean up.

You can experiment with baby's bath routine - some babies are relaxed by a bath, but some are stimulated. You might also find that Infant Massage relaxes your baby. There are lots of websites and some videos on the internet about it, and sometimes hospitals or parenting centers offer classes.

*Try experimenting with baby's bedtime routine*

Some mothers get up to pump, but go right back to sleep. They ask their partner to give that milk to the baby, which takes a bit longer when you include burping, diaper changing, and settling down. Of course, consider first your feelings and patterns of giving a bottle.

Call in your family and friends, who have been offering to help. Often a grandparent or other “baby whisperer” can come by to rock baby while you catch some zzz’s. Others may pop in to drop off a meal.

Even though it can be hard to do, try to go to bed early yourself! Take naps when you can, and sleep longer, if possible, on days off.



## SUPPORT

Hang in there! Another milestone is just around the corner! Be ready to adapt, along with your baby. Enjoy the unique aspects of each phase and reach out for information, education, and support when you need it.

For more on infant sleep and child spacing, check out CLS' Newsletters on each of these topics, "**Safe Sleep**" and, "**Birth Control**".

For breastfeeding concerns, call your lactation consultant at 888-818-5653. If an unexpected problem comes up, a lactation consultant is even on call each day, at Extension 110.



## Contact us!

My Lactation Consultant's name &  
number are:

---