

j. Bowel Movements

MODULE 8

A baby's bowel movements change colour and texture over time. Bowel movements are different for breastfed and formula fed babies.



It is normal for babies to grunt and get red in the face when having a bowel movement.

In the first few weeks it is important to monitor the number of bowel movements your baby has to ensure they are getting enough milk. After the first few weeks, your baby may not have a bowel movement every day. This does not mean your baby is constipated. Babies are constipated when their bowel movements are hard and dry. If this happens, call your health care provider, public health nurse, or any health professional. A breastfed baby is rarely constipated because breastmilk contains enough water to keep the bowel movements soft.

When a baby's milk or food is changed, their bowel movements will generally change as well.

In the first few weeks, a well fed baby:

- at 1 day old has at least 1 wet diaper and at least 1 to 2 sticky dark green/black stools
- at 2 days old has at least 2 wet diapers and at least 1 to 2 sticky dark green/black stools.
- ** This is easier to notice urine in cloth diapers. A facial tissue can be placed inside disposable diapers, if you are not sure.
- at 3 days old has at least 3 heavy wet diapers and at least 3 brown/green/yellow stools. Occasional "red brick coloured" staining is normal until day 3.
- at four days old at least 4 heavy wet diapers and at least 3 brown/green/yellow stools.
- at 5 days and older, as the milk supply increases, baby has at least 6 heavy wet diapers and at least 3 large soft yellow seedy stools per day.



Call your doctor if the baby's bowel movements are watery or have a strong smell. Your baby may have diarrhea. Diarrhea can make your baby very sick very quickly.