



Baby's Second Night

You've made it through the first 24 hours...now it is your baby's second night. The following excerpt may sound familiar....

All of a sudden, your little one discovers that he's no longer back in the warmth and comfort of the womb where he has spent the last months – and it is scary out here! He isn't hearing your familiar heartbeat, the swooshing of the placental arteries, the soothing sound of your lungs or the comforting gurgling of your intestines. Instead, he's swaddled in a diaper, clothing, blanket and hat. All sorts of people have been handling him, and he's not yet become accustomed to the new noises, lights, sounds and smells. He has found one thing though, and that's his voice....and you find that each time you take him off the breast where he comfortably drifted off to sleep, and put him in the bassinet....he protests, loudly!

In fact, each time you put him back on the breast he nurses for a little bit and then goes to sleep. As you take him off and put him to bed he cries, and starts rooting around, looking for you. This goes on, seemingly for hours. A lot of moms are convinced it is because their milk isn't "in" yet, and the baby is starving. However, it isn't that, but the baby's sudden awakening to the fact that the most comforting and comfortable place for him to be is at the breast. It's the closest to "home" he can get. It seems that this is pretty universal among babies. Lactation consultants all over the world have noticed the same thing.

So, what do you do? When he drifts off to sleep at the breast after a good feed, break the suction and slide your nipple gently out of his mouth. Don't move him except to pillow his head more comfortably on your breast. Just snuggle with him until he falls into a deep sleep where he won't be disturbed by being moved. Babies go into a light sleep state (REM) first, and then cycle in and out of REM and deep sleep about every half hour or so.

If he starts to root and act as though he wants to go back to the breast, that's fine...this is his way of settling and comforting. This is the behavior of a very new baby, and allowing him to feed on demand and fall asleep on the breast is not going to "spoil" him or create long lasting habits. In fact, the more he feeds now, the sooner your breastmilk will come in, and the sooner he'll be satisfied for longer periods.