

## SOMETIMES BREASTFEEDING CAN BE CHALLENGING

Challenges may arise but know that we are here to support and assist you through any challenge you might encounter.

- **Sole Source of Milk:** Being the sole source of milk for your baby can be demanding.
- **Interrupted Sleep:** Newborns require frequent feeding, which can interrupt your sleep and make you feel tired
- **Physical Discomfort:** You may experience soreness and/or very full breasts.
- **Milk Production Issues:** Some individuals do not produce enough milk
- **Lack of Support:** A lack of support from family or friends can cause discomfort and anxiety. Joining support networks with others who are breastfeeding can help alleviate stress

## BREASTFEEDING MAY NOT BE RIGHT FOR EVERYONE

Breastfeeding is a personal decision. Physical challenges, personal reasons, or certain medications can make it difficult or unsafe. VA supports you in making the best choice for you and your baby. Discuss with your health care provider to determine what's best for your situation.



## Women Veterans Call Center

The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) is your guide to VA. All calls are answered by women, many of whom are Veterans themselves, who will help you navigate VA, answer your questions about VA services and benefits available to you, and connect you with the Women Veterans Program Manager at your local VA medical center. This service is free, and you can call as many times as you need.

Call or text us at 855-VA-WOMEN (855-829-6636).  
WVCC representatives are available Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET.  
You can also chat with us online and learn more by visiting <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov>



**WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER**  
**855.VA.WOMEN**

### Am I Eligible for VA Health Care?

Everyone's situation is unique and so is their eligibility. To find out if you are eligible to enroll, visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility>

### Apply Online or By Mail

Go to <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply>

### Apply in Person

Visit the nearest VA medical center or clinic. You can locate your nearest VA health facility at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

### Apply by Phone

To apply for VA benefits you may have earned—such as preventative care, inpatient and urgent care services—call 1-877-222-8387

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET.  
Veterans Benefits Administration 1-800-827-1000  
[www.vba.va.gov](http://www.vba.va.gov)

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## WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

# LACTATION SERVICES



**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# LACTATION SERVICES



## WHAT SERVICES DOES VA PROVIDE FOR BREASTFEEDING?

Many VA facilities offer lactation services and programs. Services may include:

- **Classes:** Breastfeeding classes to help you prepare and be successful.
- **Consulting:** Personalized lactation counseling and education.
- **Support Groups:** Join groups for shared experiences and support.



## PROVIDING HUMAN MILK CAN:

- Protect your baby from infection—human milk is packed with antibodies that fight infection.
- Lower the risk of asthma, allergies, Type 1 diabetes, obesity, and childhood leukemia.
- Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Help your body recover from pregnancy.
- Release hormones that may lower your risk for postpartum depression.
- Lower your risk of some cancers and illnesses, such as osteoporosis, diabetes, and heart disease.

## RESOURCES INCLUDE—BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO—THE FOLLOWING:

- Breast pumps
- Nursing bras
- Pumping bras
- Breast pads
- Nipple cream
- Nipple shields
- Milk storage bags

Other items may be available for Veterans in need. Speak with your provider about other items you may need.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

- Human milk banks
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)



## HOW DO I ACCESS SERVICES FOR BREASTFEEDING AT VA?

To access services, contact or make an appointment with the Maternity Care Coordinator or lactation professional at your local VA facility. They will guide you to the best resources available.



## WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION, HELP, AND RESOURCES ON LACTATION?

VA works with Veterans to provide the education, support, and counseling you many need. For additional support and information:

- Visit the Women's Health Web Page on Breastfeeding and Lactation at: <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/topics/breastfeeding-and-lactation.asp>
- Call/Text/Chat the Women Veterans Call Center: A dedicated resource for women Veterans to get answers and support **1-855-VA-WOMEN**

**Remember:** Breastfeeding is a journey, and you don't have to navigate it alone. VA is here to support you every step of the way, ensuring you and your baby receive the best possible care.