

A series for mothers and healthcare professionals Knowledge

# What is the range of 'normal' when it comes to breastfeeding?

The infants assessed for this study<sup>1,2</sup> were healthy term-born infants between 1 – 6 months of age. They were exclusively breastfeeding on demand and growing according to the WHO growth charts. **The following information is not applicable for the first 4 weeks after birth.** 

## How and when?



4–13 breastfeeding sessions in a day<sup>1</sup> 5–37 minutes was the average duration of a breastfeeding session<sup>2</sup>



#### Night feeding is normal

- The majority (64%) of infants breastfeed day and night.
  These infants spread their milk intake evenly throughout the 24 hours.<sup>1</sup>
- Only 36% of infants don't feed at night (10 pm to 4 am).
  These infants have a large feed in the morning.<sup>1</sup>



64% Day and night 36% Day only

### Your breasts



Infants have varied feeding patterns:<sup>1</sup>

30% always take just one breast 13% always take both breasts 57% mix it up!



An average breastfeed removes 67 % of the milk from the breast<sup>1</sup>

# How much is 'normal'?

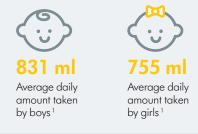
Infants feed to appetite and stop feeding when they have had enough or want to change to the other breast.<sup>1</sup>

- From a single breast, the average volume an infant drinks is 75 ml (range: 30 –135 ml).<sup>2</sup>
- It is normal for one breast to produce more milk than the other.<sup>1</sup>

54–234 ml Range of milk intake during breastfeeding session (1 or 2 breasts)<sup>3</sup>

# Do boys and girls drink the same?

Boys do drink more than girls! Boy infants drink on average 76 ml more than girl infants.<sup>1</sup>



#### The range of 'normal'...

Over a day, the average volume of milk consumed is 798 ml. But this varies from one infant who was drinking 478 ml to another drinking 1298 ml per day.<sup>2</sup>

# 478 –1298 ml

Range of daily milk intake of exclusively breastfed infants who are growing according to the WHO charts.<sup>2</sup>

Breastfed infants are indeed getting enough milk. As infants get older, they take fewer, shorter, larger feeds but their 24-hour (daily) intake will remain the same.<sup>1</sup> Between 3 and 6 months infants grow more slowly and have a relatively lower metabolic rate, so they don't need more milk.<sup>4</sup>

#### For more on breastfeeding and how your milk supply works, visit medela.com/breastfeeding

References: 1 Kent JC et al. Pediatrics. 2006;117:e387-e395 2 Kent JC et al. Breastfeed Med. 2015; 10(6):318–325. 3 Kent JC. Personal communication. 4 Kent JC et al. Breastfeed Med. 2013;8:401-407.

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