

# Infant feeding and relationships: Responsive Breastfeeding

## Feeding Cues

Developed by Women's and Newborn Services  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

### Early Cues - "I'm hungry"



Stirring



Mouth opening



Turning head  
Seeking/rooting

### Mid Cues - "I'm really hungry"



Stretching



Increasing physical  
movement



Hand to mouth

### Late Cues - "Calm me, then feed me"



Crying



Agitated body  
movements



Colour turning red

**Responsive breastfeeding** supports the development of a reciprocal, close, loving relationship between you and your baby.

It means putting your baby to your breast whenever you want or when:

- ▶ baby shows feeding cues
- ▶ baby is distressed or lonely
- ▶ your breasts are full
- ▶ you simply want a sit down and cuddle

*Breastfed babies cannot be overfed or 'spoiled' by frequent feeding.* ©  
UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative

### What to look for:

Keep baby close to you so that you can recognise his feeding cues:

- ▶ rapid eye movements,
- ▶ sucking fingers and fists,
- ▶ rooting (opening their mouth as though they were about to breastfeed),
- ▶ moving and wriggling.

These are all signs that your baby is getting ready for a feed.

- ▶ Crying is the last sign of hunger and by then your baby may be too distressed to feed effectively. Try to soothe him before you offer a feed. Skin to skin contact is great for calming your baby at any time.