

Breastfeeding Assessment Score for Babies receiving Special or Transitional Care

Score	Category that best describes baby's behaviour at the breast during the first 10 mins...	Action
A	Offered the breast, not interested, remained sleepy;	Full top up (preferably with Expressed Breast Milk)
B	Interested in feeding, licking & nuzzling, however does not latch;	Full top up (preferably with EBM)
C	Latches* onto the breast, has a few sucks then comes off the breast; repeats this pattern for several minutes or falls asleep within just a few minutes of latching;	Full top up (preferably with EBM)
D	Latches* & starts sucking & swallowing**, but ... - sucking is shallow for most of the feed (more than 2 sucks/second), - sucking bursts are short - pauses are long (Mum feels need to encourage baby to restart sucking);	Half - full top up (preferably with EBM) – depending on weight gain, Mum's milk supply and wet & dirty nappies. Babies who are receiving phototherapy or have excessive weight loss should receive a full top-up;
E	Latches well * with regular bursts of slow rhythmical sucking and swallowing** (1 suck/sec) interspersed with short pauses and feed duration is typically between 5-10 mins;	Half top up (preferably with EBM), consider not topping up if mother is available for next feed. If score is A – E at next feed offer a top-up feed as indicated above. Babies who are receiving phototherapy or have excessive weight loss should receive a full top-up;
F	Latches well * with regular bursts of slow rhythmical sucking and swallowing** (1 suck/sec) interspersed with short pauses and feed duration is within range of 10 – 40 mins/breast; More than one breast may be taken;	The 2nd breast can be offered but no top-up is required provided baby: - wakes naturally to feed at least 8x/day, - is having expected no. & colour of wet & dirty nappies - is gaining weight (Weight check every 48 hrs) - And Mum's milk supply is increasing;

*Latching criteria - See reverse

** Sucking & swallowing criteria - see reverse

Adapted from a scale used by Queen Charlotte's Hospital SCBU, London.

Deferriere, Nivivilet et al 1998. Development of the preterm infant breastfeeding behaviour scale (PIBBS): A Study of nurse-mother assessment. J Hum Lact 14: 200-206