

What is the range of “normal” when it comes to breastfeeding?

The infants assessed for this study¹ 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 often?



4–13

Number of breastfeeding sessions in a day¹



How long?



12–67 minutes

Average duration of a breastfeeding session¹



How much?

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

- From a single breast, the average volume an infant drinks is 75 ml (range: 30–135 ml)¹
- It is normal for one breast to produce more milk than the other¹



67%

An average breastfeed removes 67% of the milk from the breast¹



54–234 ml

Average amount of milk of a breastfeeding session (1 or 2 breasts)¹



One breast or both?

Infants have varied feeding patterns:¹

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



- 30% one breast
- 13% both breasts
- 57% mixed



Night feeding is normal

- The majority (64%) of infants breastfeed day and night¹
- These infants spread their milk intake evenly throughout the 24 hours



- 64% Day and night
- 36% Day only



- 28% Morning
- 28% Afternoon
- 24% Evening
- 20% Night

- Only 36% of infants don't feed at night (10 PM to 4 AM)
- These infants have a large feed in the morning¹



Do boys and girls drink the same?

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



831 ml

Average daily amount taken by boys¹



755 ml

Average daily amount taken by girls¹

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 1356 ml per day.¹

478–1356 ml

Range of daily milk intake of exclusively breastfed infants who are growing according to the WHO charts.¹

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.¹ Between 3 and 6 months infants grow more slowly and have a relatively lower metabolic rate, so they don't need more milk.²

References

- 1 Kent JC et al. Pediatrics. 2006;117:e387-e395.
- 2 Kent JC et al. Breastfeed Med. 2013;8:401-407.