



### Standard 5: Sleep with baby for a daily nap feeding

Either relaxing or sleeping while your baby nurses to sleep for an afternoon nap is a wonderful way to get yourself some much needed rest. Babies often enjoy nursing for part of their nap or all of their nap. We live in such a busy society that it is very tempting to fit in as much as we can each day. However, nature has other ideas. I don't know about you, but I find there is a lull in the middle to late afternoon when I feel tired and need a snack and some quiet time before I need to make dinner. Oftentimes this is when my baby wants to nurse and nap too. By going along with this natural tendency, you also allow for more stimulation at the breast which can lengthen your time of lactation amenorrhea. Sheila Kippley recommends at least one nap nursing for 30 minutes each day. Based on her experience with breastfeeding moms, missing the nap can be a key factor in the early return of fertility (*The Seven Standards of Ecological Breastfeeding*, p. 41-42).

If you have older children, you could incorporate a family rest time when baby is sleeping. All the children can sleep, look at books quietly, or watch a short DVD during this time. If you, yourself, just plan to rest during baby's nap and not actually fall asleep, you could have a basket of picture books, quiet toys or books on CD for you to share with your other children to keep them entertained. If a mother calls me about a plugged duct or possible symptoms of mastitis, one of the first suggestions I give is REST. I know that mothers have a lot of responsibilities and many do not live close to extended family members. However, we need to allow ourselves time for rest and recreation. Remember that God created everything in six days and rested on the seventh; if God rested, so should we. Jesus was asleep on the boat the afternoon of the big storm. Jesus also ate and drank and rested with friends during various times in the Gospels. When I am well rested, I am more patient with my children and do not feel as overwhelmed by the chaos of my family. Now I should go heed my own advice ☺