

# SOME THOUGHTS ON WEANING

*Posted on September 3, 2013 by*



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As N approaches his first birthday (In October), my thoughts are drifting towards starting the weaning process.

When most new moms get pregnant, breastfeeding literature bombards them from all directions. Some prefer to take it as it comes and decide they won't worry too much if it doesn't work out. Some are determined to make it work. And some fall in between. For me, formula was a word I didn't want to entertain, as it doesn't sit well with the primal philosophy at all. I knew I wanted to make breastfeeding work.

I prepared to make it work by reading, arming myself with information, watching videos of getting a proper latch on Youtube etc. And my story could not be more beautiful. Not only has the experience for me been fabulous, but also N's face every time he is going to be fed is truly delightful. Not to forget the tranquility in his body language while feeding. While at all other moments he cannot stop moving at a frantic pace, while nursing I can sit with him still and stroke his cheeks and run my fingers through his curls to my hearts content.

But even though most moms have some inkling of how much they are prepared to make breastfeeding work or not, most just want to see it through the initial 6 months without giving much thought to how long they want to feed. Once you get past the initial 2-3 (physically and emotionally challenging) months, is when the rewards of breastfeeding truly kick in. Therefore unless you get past those months, you may not realize that it's truly as lovely as they say it is when you stick with it for a longer period.

I knew I wanted to breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months. After that I hadn't given it much thought. I really thought that once N loses interest in breastfeeding and takes more interest in food, I would automatically wean. Oh how naive I was.

N loves loves loves breastfeeding though he is a decent eater. His favourite food is breast milk. I don't see him self-weaning of his own accord any time soon.

I nurse him early morning, afternoon, before bed and once or twice during the night. I know in order to wean him I will have to let him cry a little and deny him the breast though he may ask for it. That kind of makes me sad which is why I am putting it off till I can explain it to him instead of just going cold turkey.

Why then will I try to wean him if it makes me sad?

Though I enjoy breastfeeding, I know I don't want to continue for more than 18 or 20 months. I don't know why but I feel as of now that's a good enough time. Maybe 6 months down the line I will feel differently but right now, it seems like a decently long time frame because I hope to have baby number two around the time N is two and a half years or so.

So my first step in that direction is dropping the day feed.

N has started eating a decent lunch and honestly does not need that middle of the day feed. I know if I distract him and he gets tired out, he will nap without needing that feed. That's an easy feed to drop so I may do it around the one-year mark. I could have done it today, he didn't ask for the breast, but somehow I am not there yet.

The next nursing to go will be the middle of the night feeds. I know the doctor told me to do it already, but like I said before, I don't take doctors' words to mean much when it comes to these things. I am happy to co-sleep and nurture until N is old enough to understand me when I tell him we are not nursing at night anymore but we can cuddle.

I am looking at 16 to 18 months before I drop the night feeds.

So hopefully I will have an 18 month old who feeds only in the morning and night (and hopefully FINALLY sleeps through the night).

I haven't strategized about when to drop those, but since nothing really goes to plan with a baby I will cross that bridge when I get there.

Ideally I would love it if N dropped feeds on his own, and weaned him self off. But I may have to do it for him. And I don't know how I feel about that.

A lot you read online about breastfeeding says that in the first year, nursing is the main source of calories and food is just for practice. Well I have no idea how many ounces of breast milk N consumes, as I have no way of measuring. But I do feel he is still nursing quite a bit but also gets a lot of calories from [solid food](#).

So does the ratio switch as soon as he turns one? Is he supposed to get a lot more calories from solids all of a sudden? I don't know and I don't really care. All I know is that I will keep increasing his meal quantities as and when he finishes off portions, and let him lead the way.

As of now, this is the broad plan and these are the initial thoughts. Though I would love to nurse for as long as possible, I am beginning to feel like I may not follow that through and may try and stop breastfeeding over the course of the next 8 months or so. Stay tuned.

Thanks for reading. When did you wean? And was it a gradual process?

