

The Size of a Newborn's Belly

Objectives:

- Describe the stomach size and capacity of a newborn
- Understand the change in stomach capacity over the first few days of life
- Help parents visualize the size of their infants stomach to reinforce exclusive breastfeeding

Materials:

Handouts on belly size
Belly Balls (Instructions included on how to make your own)

Description:

This training focuses on the size and capacity of an infant's stomach. It was developed to use on a bulletin board. This can be set up in a break room and nurses can sign in and out when they read the information.

Instructions on Making Belly Balls

Decide what would be most useful for your staff. Do they need a few zip lock bags of belly balls at the nurses' station to help parents visualize the size of the belly? Will you use these in prenatal classes? Do you want every nurse to have the "first day belly size" hanging off of her lanyard? Do you want to make cards for every mother to take home?

Once you decide what is best for your facility you can decide what materials you need.

DAY ONE: The "first day" belly ball is the size of a shooter marble. These can be bought at most toy stores. There are also wooden beads with holes for stringing this size. They are very light and can be strung to comfortably hang on lanyards.

DAY THREE: The "day three" belly ball is the size of a ping pong ball. These can also be found at toy stores.

DAY TEN: The "day ten" belly ball is about the size of a plastic Easter egg. What a coincidence! Those can be found in just about every grocery and discount store right now. If you are reading this after Easter I'm afraid you're going to have to get on the internet and search for these.

ADULT: The "adult" belly ball is the size of a softball. It probably won't fit in your zip lock belly ball bag. However, it normally freaks people out a little when they think about what they had for dinner last night. This is a great ice breaker for discussing the size of your baby's belly.

The Size of Your Baby's Belly

Day One Your baby's belly can hold approximately 5-7 ml (that is only one sixth to one quarter of an ounce). His stomach is about the size of a shooter marble. Your colostrum is the perfect nutrition for your baby.

Day Three Your baby's belly is doing some stretching today (your breasts probably are as well) His belly is the size of a ping pong ball and can hold approximately 22-27 ml. This is another example of how perfectly your body works with your baby in order to meet his needs.

Day Ten Your baby may be getting much more efficient at transferring milk. His belly has stretched to the size of a plastic Easter egg and holds 60-81 ml.