

# LATCH Assessment Tool

- The LATCH system assigns a numerical score of 0, 1, or 2 to five key components of breastfeeding for a possible total score of 10 points.
- Ideally, the quality of the infant's latch should be assessed twice over a 24 hour period by two different healthcare providers and documented. (For example, the nurse can review the LATCH scores from the previous shift and see that there has been improvement related to the "hold" attribute, with the mother able to position without help. However, the nurse may see that the "comfort" characteristic has worsened over time and therefore needs follow-up. This collaborative approach provides a consistent measure of the progress of breastfeeding.)
- Make copies of this tool to use in your practice.

	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>L</b> Latch	Too sleepy  No sustained latch or suck	Repeated attempts for latch or suck  Hold nipple in mouth	Grasps breast  Tongue down  Lips flanged  Rhythmical sucking	
<b>A</b> Audible swallowing	None	A few with stimulation	Spontaneous and intermittent (<24 hrs )	
<b>T</b> Type of nipple	Inverted	Flat	Everted (after stimulation)	
<b>C</b> Comfort	Engorged  Cracked, bleeding, large blisters, or bruises	Filling  Reddened, small blisters or bruises	Soft  Non-tender	
<b>H</b> Hold	Full assist (staff holds infant at breast)	Minimal assist (staff holds, then mother takes over)	No assist from staff  Mother able to position and hold infant	
				<b>TOTAL:</b>

Jenson, Wallace & Kelsay (1994). LATCH: A breastfeeding charting system and documentation tool. *JOGNN*, 23(1):29.