

My Top 10 Tips for Surviving Weaning From Breastfeeding

Weaning from breastfeeding is not a lighthearted stroll through the park for a lot of moms. It can be downright HARD. Since beginning my own weaning journey, the following tips are the things that are helping me cope. I hope these ideas will help you too, Mama.

1. Distract

Find distractions for yourself and your child during times when you would normally nurse. Play an active game, do a craft, do some baking, go outside, go out to eat or go to a store.

2. Go Somewhere

Take your child to a new and exciting place during the first skipped nursing session. Places like outdoor parks, swimming pools, trampoline parks, or indoor inflatable parks would be a positive note to start off your weaning journey.

3. Connect in New Ways

Find new ways to physically connect with your child to replace the closeness you shared during nursing sessions. Start by offering a variety of different physical connections to your child and see which ones he responds well to. Try extra hugs, holding him more often while walking through stores or around the house, tickling games, cuddling on the couch while watching a movie or reading a book (if this doesn't encourage nursing), giving lots of silly kisses, throwing him in the air and

catching him, giving him bouncy rides on your knees, or giving him rides on your back and shoulders.

4. Take Time for Yourself

Give yourself some space. Let your spouse or a family member watch your child for periods of time now and then so that you can have time to yourself to process your emotions and rest your body. This can be a very taxing experience for some women emotionally and physically. Go easy on yourself.

5. Plan Ahead

Plan to begin your weaning process at a time when you don't have any pressing obligations in the near future. You may be surprised by how much energy it takes to stop or slow down on producing milk. It seems counterintuitive, but your body is going through a major adjustment. You will likely need to allow yourself time to rest.

6. Talk it Out

Find someone supportive and non-judgmental you can talk to. Hopefully your spouse is supporting you, but you may also need the comfort of talking to a female who has gone through this before. You may want to know if someone else has experienced similar things to what you are going through, or you may just need someone to listen while you vent or cry.

7. Join a Virtual Support Group

Join a weaning from breastfeeding support group on Facebook. There isn't nearly enough weaning support out there, but as of this writing, there are at least a couple

of groups available to join on Facebook.

8. Know Your Reasons

Be prepared ahead of time with your solid reasons for weaning from breastfeeding. If you are going to have to say no to your child when she asks to nurse, even if she responds well, you may struggle with guilt. Remind yourself of why you are doing this and the benefits that will come out of it during these difficult moments.

9. Get Good Nutrition

Eat healthy, but go easy on yourself. This is a huge adjustment for your body. It is important to support your body by feeding it good nutrients. Of course, every hormonal woman needs some chocolate, but binging on sugar and junk food will only make you feel worse.

10. Be Flexible

Be Flexible if possible. Some women have reasons for weaning that limit flexibility, such as returning to work or other commitments. But if you or your little one are having an especially rough day and you just need to nurse when you weren't planning to, don't beat yourself up. Weaning can be very difficult physically and emotionally for mother and child. Give both of you some grace.