

Breastfeeding during bushfire periods



Natural disasters including bushfires can have profound impacts on infant feeding methods. Breastmilk has protective anti-inflammatory properties which can reduce the effects of air pollution on the baby.

Stressful situations can impact breast milk supply. Women should be supported to continue breastfeeding their baby during periods of extreme air pollution caused by bushfire smoke. Breastfeeding provides comfort for the mother and their baby during the bushfire events.

Tips for breastfeeding during bushfire periods



Continue breastfeeding if possible

Stay hydrated



Have access to food

Wash your hands before feeding your infant. If soap and safe water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol.



If expressing, learn how to express breastmilk by hand or manual breast pump in case of power outage

In case you are separated have an extra supply of breastmilk near your baby



Stay connected with friends and family if you are able

Have enough rest where possible



Prepare emergency kit

Call Breastfeeding Helpline (1800 686 268)

To cover 8 feeds per day for up to 3 days without access to mains water and electricity prepare:

Emergency kit for a breastfed baby

- ✓ 10L of drinking water for mum during the crisis
- ✓ 36 nappies
- ✓ 100 nappy wipes
- ✓ Detergent/sanitiser for washing hands
- ✓ Have scarf/wrap if you want to cover you and your baby

Emergency kit for a baby fed expressed breastmilk

- ✓ 10L of drinking water for mum during the crisis
- ✓ 15L water for washing hands
- ✓ 30 cups or bottles for expressing and feeding
- ✓ Detergent/sanitiser for washing hands
- ✓ 36 nappies & 100 nappy wipes

For feeding your child during natural emergencies please refer the link:
<https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/feed-baby-emergency>

Breastfeeding presents a safe and nutritious option for continued infant feeding during bushfire events. Breastfeeding is safe and generally has minimal requirements, with the exception of a safe environment for mother and baby.

