What is the range of “normal” when it comes to breastfeeding?

The infants assessed for this study were healthy term-born infants between 1 – 6 months of age. They were exclusively breastfeeding on demand and growing according to the WHO growth charts. The following information is not applicable for the first 4 weeks after birth.

**How often?**

- **4 – 13** Number of breastfeeding sessions in a day

**How long?**

- **12 – 67 minutes** Average duration of a breastfeeding session

**How much?**

- Infants feed to appetite and stop feeding when they have had enough or want to change to the other breast.
- **67%** An average breastfeeding removes 67% of the milk from the breast
- **4 – 13 12 – 67 minutes**
- From a single breast, the average volume an infant drinks is 75 ml (range: 30 – 135 ml)
- It is normal for one breast to produce more milk than the other
- **54 – 234 ml** Average amount of milk of a breastfeeding session (1 or 2 breasts)

**One breast or both?**

- Infants have varied feeding patterns:
  - 30% always take just one breast
  - 13% always take both breasts, and
  - 57% mix it up!
- **30% one breast**
- **13% both breasts**
- **57% mixed**

**Night feeding is normal**

- The majority (64%) of infants breastfeed day and night
- These infants spread their milk intake evenly throughout the 24 hours
- **28% Morning**
- **28% Afternoon**
- **24% Evening**
- **20% Night**
- Only 36% of infants don’t feed at night (10 PM to 4 AM)
- These infants have a large feed in the morning

**Do boys and girls drink the same?**

- Boys do drink more than girls
- Boy infants drink on average 76 ml more than girl infants.
- **831 ml** Average daily amount taken by boys
- **755 ml** Average daily amount taken by girls

**The range of normal...**

- Over a day, the average volume of milk consumed is 798 ml. But this varies from one infant who was drinking 478 ml to another drinking 1356 ml per day.
- **478 – 1356 ml** Range of daily milk intake of exclusively breastfed infants who are growing according to the WHO charts.