



Time to Talk...

TWINS & MORE part 2

MARINA FOGLE & DR CHIARA HUNT

The sisters discuss early life with twins or multiple babies

Giving birth to twins or multiples is joyous but for many, the prospect can be terrifying. Whatever anyone tells you, bringing up twins is challenging, particularly in the early months. Everything is twofold – twice as many feeds, twice as many nappies, twice as much crying and, quite possibly, you feeling twice as sleep-deprived and overwhelmed. But don't forget, without doubt you have twice the smiles, hugs, first steps and giggles, and twice the joy. And, of course, your babies will forever have a close friend and playmate. Here's our guide to making it easier:

Get your babies into the same feeding and sleeping routine. Although it's hard, feeding twins together is not impossible and the sooner you master this, the better. If you end up feeding them at different times, there will be no time for anything else and

it becomes easy for exhaustion and low mood to set in.

Teach them to feed, settle and sleep at the same time.

Most babies very quickly learn to sleep through each other's crying, however, if yours are light sleepers background 'white noise' can really help.

Get them used to the bottle as well as the breast. This will enable you to share some of the responsibility of feeding but also give you some flexibility if your milk supply dwindles and your babies need top-ups.

If you're not producing enough breastmilk, pump between feeds. This will stimulate your body to produce more milk.

Don't feel guilty if you have to top up. We all know that breastfeeding is best for babies, but supplying enough milk for

two babies can be difficult for some mothers. If you find you have to top up, don't beat yourself up about it. It's tough enough being a mother to twins without feeling guilty about something you can't control.

Remember, your babies can't hurt themselves by crying.

Mothers of twins all have to get used to the sound of their babies crying. It's not because they're negligent mothers, but often they're busy with one child and simply can't get to the other straight away.

Get as much help as you can.

Being a father of twins throws dads - who often lack confidence - in at the deep end, which is a great thing. Most fathers of twins end up mucking in from day one because they have to. And don't be afraid to ask favours of anyone else who offers - even if it's just for an hour during the day,

taking the babies for a walk in the pushchair to give you a break.

Don't forget about your partner.

Parenthood strains a relationship at the best of times, but with twins, the stresses are double. Having a strong, healthy relationship is the best thing you can do for your children.

Make friends. Most mothers of twins agree that having support from other mothers of twins is invaluable. It's worth joining a local twins group. Have a look at the Tamba (Twins and Multiple Births Association) website, tamba.org.uk/clubs for details of groups that are local to you. 

Dr Chiara Hunt and Marina Fogle are founders of The Bump Class. Their book, *The Bump Class: An Expert Guide to Pregnancy, Birth & Beyond* (£18.99, Vermilion) is available now. thebumpclass.com

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