

When Kittens Are Born

By

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Kittens are born with their eyes closed (and they remain so for the first 7 to 14 days to protect them from light); their hearing is also not fully developed. Kittens do however have a well-developed tactile (touch) system which helps them find their mother and stay warm; this is important because newborns are unable to regulate their own body temperatures. Their olfactory system (sense of smell) is also present at birth and plays a role in helping the kittens find their mother's milk. Once all the kittens in the litter are born, the mother stays with them almost all of the time, leaving them only to find food and to toilet. Kittens will begin suckling in the first 2 hours after birth and for the first few days of their lives, kittens will suckle about 70% of the time.

