

BREASTFEEDING EDUCATION



A Guide for You and Your Baby



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What Are the Benefits of Breastfeeding for Me?

Mothers who breastfeed their babies enjoy many benefits:

- ✓ **Less risk of diabetes**, especially important if mothers have gestational diabetes during pregnancy
- ✓ **Faster weight loss after pregnancy**
- ✓ **Less risk of breast cancer**
- ✓ **Less risk of cancer of the ovaries**
- ✓ **Stronger bones**
- ✓ **Less bleeding**, especially important for mothers with low iron
- ✓ **Special hormones to help mothers be loving and patient**
- ✓ **A healthier baby**
- ✓ **Pride in giving her baby the best start**

"Breastfeeding is not just good for the baby — ***it is great for the mother, too.***"



Your Breasts Are Changing!

Have you noticed your breasts are getting fuller, maybe tender? They are getting ready to make **COLOSTRUM**, the strong first milk.

Colostrum is like "liquid gold," full of ingredients to keep your baby healthy. It is like an immunization. It is so concentrated, your baby only needs a tablespoon or two at a time. Your baby won't need any formula or water, just colostrum for the first few days.



Exclusive Breastfeeding? Yes, You Can!

You **CAN** exclusively breastfeed your baby! We can help. So can the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC). Ask your nurses for referrals to classes where you can learn how to make plenty of milk and be comfortable with breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding should be comfortable. If your nipples or breasts hurt, ask for help to fix the problem so both you and your baby can breastfeed comfortably.

Doctors recommend that babies be given only breastmilk for the first six months. Babies who take only breastmilk are much healthier and grow well. You can make plenty of milk if you breastfeed frequently and avoid bottles for the first month or more.

You can breastfeed after you go back to work or school. WIC has special help, including breast pumps, for breastfeeding mothers who have to leave their babies.

Myths About Breastfeeding

Common concerns and the truth about breastfeeding:



"I'll get sore nipples."

Breastfeeding should NOT HURT. Nipples can get sore if your baby isn't attached well to the breast. To avoid discomfort, have your baby open wide and help her get a large mouthful of breast, and it usually feels better. Your nurse can help you with attaching the baby. After you go home, WIC can help, too.

"I won't be able to tell if my baby is getting enough with just breastfeeding."

Watch your baby's diapers for urine and stool every day. What goes in must come out. Several stools daily during the first few days show your baby is getting plenty of colostrum. After the fourth day, watch for 4 to 5 wet diapers and at least 2 or 3 stools in 24 hours. This means your baby is getting plenty of food with just breastfeeding.

"I heard my breasts will sag."

Pregnancy, not breastfeeding, causes changes in your breasts' shape.

"I'm embarrassed to nurse in front of people."

You don't have to show your body to breastfeed. Some mothers use a blanket, or sling to cover up. Or try wearing a tank top under a blouse - lift the tank top from the bottom to breastfeed while the shirt still covers your middle and no one will see anything.

"I get mad a lot, so I'm afraid my milk will spoil."

Getting mad can make you tense and your milk might take longer to "let down" or flow. This can frustrate your baby and he or she might cry. The milk isn't "bad," the flow is just slower. Take 10 deep, slow breaths, relax your shoulders, and the milk will start to flow.

Myths About Breastfeeding

Common concerns and the truth about breastfeeding:

"I don't eat healthfully, so my milk won't be as good as formula."

Even if you eat a poor diet, your milk is much more nutritious than formula. However, you will be healthier and feel better if you eat well. This sets a good example for your family.

"I can't nurse, I have to go back to work (or school)."

Mothers CAN breastfeed even if they work or go to school, and WIC can give you more information about pumping your breastmilk. Many working mothers say it is best to exclusively breastfeed when home (no bottles or pacifiers), but let babies have bottles of pumped milk or formula and a pacifier if necessary during the workday. Breastfeeding mothers miss fewer work days because of a sick child, and mother and baby connect easily after separation.

"I'm going to have a Cesarean, so it will be too hard."

After a Cesarean, you will need more help getting started with breastfeeding because you can't move as well, but soon it will get easier, especially because you won't have to fix, heat or wash bottles. Your nurse can help you find comfortable breastfeeding positions that will keep the baby off your Cesarean incision.

"Nobody in my family breastfed, so I can't."

In the past, many women who did not breastfeed either didn't know the benefits or didn't get help with problems. Now we know how important breastfeeding is for mother and baby. Ask us for help if you have problems.

"I smoke."

Breastmilk with a little nicotine is still more nutritious than formula. Don't smoke around your baby and cut back as much as you can, but breastfeeding is still best.

"I like to party too much."

Breastfeeding mothers can drink alcohol. If you have more than one drink, wait a couple hours before breastfeeding. If you are going to have a lot of drinks, leave your baby with a safe and sober person and wait to breastfeed until you have sobered up. Don't do street drugs when breastfeeding. They can hurt or even kill your baby.

"I am diabetic."

Breastfeeding is really good for diabetic mothers and their babies. Exclusive breastfeeding can reduce the risk of your baby becoming diabetic.

"I can't take anything if I get sick."

Nursing mothers can take many common medications for colds, fever or pain, and many antibiotics. Ask your doctor for more information.

Breastfed Babies Get Sick Less Often Than Formula Fed Babies

Breastfed babies are less likely to suffer from:

- Respiratory infections (breathing problems)
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Ear infections
- Allergies and eczema
- Asthma
- Childhood cancer
- Crib death (SIDS)

Later in life, breastfed babies are less likely to develop health problems, including:

- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Asthma
- Heart Disease
- Crooked teeth and cavities

Sick babies and children are unhappy and cry more. They are harder to care for. Extra time is spent going to the doctor and picking up medicine. Sometimes mothers have to miss work. Healthy children are happier.

"Getting started breastfeeding is a little more trouble in the beginning,
but a healthy baby makes your life easier for a long time."



Benefits of Breastfeeding

Benefits for Baby

- Less diarrhea
- Fewer earaches
- Lower risk of SIDS (crib death)
- Less constipation
- Fewer allergies
- Lower risk of asthma
- Lower risk of childhood cancer
- Lower risk of diabetes
- Lower risk of obesity
- Bonding time with Mom
- Stronger, straighter teeth
- Smarter



Benefits for Mom

- Lose weight easier
- Mom more calm & patient
- Can rest while feeding
- No bottles to fix and wash
- Easy to travel, less to carry
- Healthier baby easier to care for
- Baby calms easily at breast
- Spit up breastmilk doesn't stain clothing
- Baby smells better
- Lower risk of breast cancer
- Lower risk of cancer of ovaries
- Lower risk of diabetes



A Great Beginning - Skin to Skin & Rooming In

Your baby wants to stay very close to you, right next to your body, skin to skin.

When your baby is born, he will be dried off and placed skin-to-skin on your tummy. This will help him feel **safe and warm and breathe better**. This is the best time to start bonding with your baby, the beginning of a close and loving relationship.

Your newborn is ready to feed soon after birth, some even feed in the delivery room! Babies often can move to the breast and start nursing by themselves after birth.

If you have a Cesarean delivery, Dad can hold the baby skin to skin to keep baby warm and calm until you are alert and ready for your baby.

You and your baby will be "**rooming in**," staying together in the same room day and night. This makes it easy to practice skin to skin and breastfeeding, **keeping baby happy and helping him gain weight**. It also **helps you feel confident in caring for your baby** and provides special bonding time.

"Skin to skin contact, frequent feeding, and rooming in are ***what babies want and need.***"



Planning on Doing Both, Breast and Bottle?

Many mothers plan to do both breastfeeding and bottle feeding. However, in the first weeks after birth, supplementing breastfeeding with bottles of formula while mother and baby are learning to breastfeed can cause many problems:

You are likely to get engorged.

The first days, if baby is full of formula, he won't practice breastfeeding much while the breast is still soft. After the 3rd day, your breasts get fuller and harder to grasp. If he hasn't been practicing, he may have trouble latching on and sucking, and your breasts may get too full and engorged. Exclusive and very frequent breastfeeding in the first days protects your breasts.

Baby gets confused how to latch or suck well.

Baby uses his tongue and mouth differently on the breast and bottle. In the first weeks, many babies get confused if you give both breast and bottle and never get good at breastfeeding. Exclusive breastfeeding helps mom and baby become breastfeeding experts. Later, when mom is ready for work or school, a breastfeeding baby will be able to take a bottle without confusion.

Baby is more likely to have stomach problems, asthma and diabetes.

Baby's stomach is not 'sealed' or protected at birth. Early exposure to cow milk protein (formula) can trigger diabetes or asthma later in life. Exclusive breastfeeding protects baby from many health problems.

Your breasts don't get enough stimulation to get a full milk supply.

Frequent breastfeeding causes the breasts to make milk FASTER. You can increase your milk supply by breastfeeding MORE OFTEN. Bottles of formula make the baby nurse less often, so your breasts make LESS milk. Frequent breastfeeding and avoiding formula and pacifiers makes for lots of milk.

"You CAN be successful giving only breast in the first days and for the first six months.

***We can help you.
So can WIC."***

