

Why Breastfeed?

Breastmilk is nature's most suited and protective substance you can give your baby. All physician organizations that work with mothers and babies including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of OB-GYN, the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, and the American Academy of Family Practitioners recommend breastfeeding over formula feeding, with exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life (with no supplementary foods or formula, just breastmilk), with the addition of complementary foods starting at 6 months of age, and to continue breastfeeding till 2 years of life and beyond, or whatever time period is mutually beneficial for both mother and baby. Any breastfeeding is protective and the longer you breastfeed the longer you and your baby reap in the benefits. Extended breastfeeding, even if infrequently (1-2 times per day) is still associated with less risk of infections, cancers, allergies and other immune mediated diseases.

From head to toe, the benefits for the baby are as follows:

Head: enhancement of IQ, nervous system maturation, less meningitis, enhancement of mother-baby bonding, breastmilk is a natural pain relief for both mom and baby (enhances endorphin or nature's opiates release), breastfeeding releases oxytocin in the mother which helps her relax and make her content (no joke) which benefits baby with a happier mom

Eyes: enhances vision and eye development, less night blindness

Ears: prevention of ear infections and fluid in the ears

Mouth/Jaw: growth promotion of proper jaw development and jaw muscles, enhances speech development through tongue development

Teeth: better jaw development and less tooth decay

Endocrine(Glandular): prevention of autoimmune endocrine diseases such as thyroid disease, and prevention of Type I and type II diabetes

Heart: prevention of hypertension as an adult, less risk of coronary artery disease and high cholesterol as an adult, less risk of stroke as an adult

Lungs: less upper and lower respiratory tract infections from viruses and bacteria which means less colds, less bronchiolitis (RSV), and viral or bacterial pneumonias, less allergies and asthma, less wheezing episodes associated with food intolerance, less risk of SIDS

Stomach and Intestines: less spit up, less diarrhea from viruses and bacteria, less food allergies, less risk of inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis), less immune mediated food intolerances, diapers with less offensive smelling stools, less botulism, breastmilk more digestible than formula and goes through the intestines much faster and more easily, breastfeeding helps pass meconium (initial sticky stools in newborns) faster, promotes proper intestinal development, less risk of necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) in premies, less risk of childhood and adult obesity

Immune system: helps babies respond to vaccines better, helps develop the infant's immune system and breastmilk itself gives the baby many immune factors which help fight off

infection ,prevent infectious diseases, immune diseases and even cancer; less eczema and immune skin disorders, less environmental allergies and less asthma

Urinary Tract: less urinary tract infections

Cancer prevention: less risk of certain types of childhood leukemias and lymphomas

Bones: less arthritis including rheumatoid arthritis

Moms benefit from breastfeeding too with less risk of uterine, breast and ovarian cancers, less endometriosis, slower return of menses and longer child spacing, quicker uterine shrinkage (involution) and faster resolution of postpartum bleeding, less osteoporosis, less work with not having to prepare bottles and clean up afterwards, less postpartum depression, enhanced self esteem, less time missed from work due to healthier baby with less doctor visits, faster resolution of pregnancy induced weight gain, reduced insulin requirements in diabetic breastfeeding mothers, and less risk of anemia due to quicker recovery from delivery and less menstrual periods.

In addition breastmilk is free, genetically engineered for YOUR baby, not like formula which is mass made, cleaner, and is more economical with less waste, energy and less plastic used. Breastfeeding is green!

We recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, then extended breastfeeding with the addition of complementary foods at 6 months and to continue BF to 2 years and beyond, and want to help do everything possible to make it a good experience for all. Please talk to us if we can help you with this wonderful gift you can give yourself and to your baby. Some favorite websites and documents for reference:

www.breastfeedingonline.org

www.aap.org, section on breastfeeding

www.ilca.org

www.bfmed.org

www.lalecheleagueinternational.org

www.asklenore.org

www.fda.gov.org,section on breastfeeding

www.breastfeedingbasics.org

Ip,S et al. <http://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/evidence/pdf/brfout/brfout.pdf>

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9789241595230_eng.pdf

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