

# Feeding Your Baby

## What YOU Can do to Support Breastfeeding

1. Encourage mothers who want to breastfeed
2. Be knowledgeable about the risks of not breastfeeding
3. Talk about what you've learned about the benefits of breastfeeding
4. Be supportive of women who are breastfeeding in public
5. Be willing to breastfeed or give your children breast milk



References for this brochure can be found at:

[www.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/Stone-age-Parenting-overview.htm](http://www.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/Stone-age-Parenting-overview.htm)



Breastfeeding is normal,  
natural, and necessary for  
optimal infant health!

This brochure was  
brought to you by the St.  
Joseph County  
Breastfeeding Coalition

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## How to get started breastfeeding



1. Immediately after birth, keep your baby skin to skin as much as possible.
2. Offer your breast to your baby as soon as possible.
3. Ask for help and support (knowledgeable nurses, nursing moms, and lactation consultants are happy to help).
4. Keep trying and practicing breastfeeding.
5. Avoid bottles and pacifiers until breastfeeding is well established (unless medically necessary).
6. Avoid using drugs during childbirth, if possible.
7. Check on safe medications here: <http://www.infantrisk.com/>
8. Tap into the many breastfeeding resources in your community, including the St. Joseph County Breastfeeding Coalition!

## Advantages of breastfeeding

The information in this brochure presents an argument against the idea that 'formula feeding is just fine.'

There should be no question. The evidence is overwhelming regarding the quality difference between formula and breastfeeding. Mothers' milk, developed through evolution with thousands of ingredients to build the human brain, body, and immune system, cannot be compared with a man-made product of a couple dozen ingredients that are non-human and in wrong proportions.

**Breast milk is normal, natural, and necessary for optimal infant development.**

## Who Can Breastfeed?



### Moms who work

Working, breastfeeding moms are protected by labor laws that allow pumping at work. Federal law mandates that companies provide a private room for pumping, refrigerated storage space, and paid breaks during which moms can pump.<sup>98,99</sup>

### Moms on medication

Surprisingly, most medications are safe for breastfeeding, with a few exceptions, such as chemotherapy and radioactive drugs.<sup>100-102</sup> Doctors will modify medications for breastfeeding mothers when asked so that their children won't be harmed.

### Moms who take birth control

Mothers are encouraged to wait at least 6 weeks after they give birth to start taking a low dosage birth control to prevent low milk supply. They are encouraged to take progestin-only contraceptives, which may have less of an effect on milk supply than estrogen-containing contraceptives.<sup>103</sup>

### Moms who wish to give partners, friends, and family bonding time with baby

Breastfeeding mothers need much support, so the best thing family members and friends can do is to offer their unconditional support and help, which can involve caring for the baby in ways other than feeding. Family members can respond promptly to the baby's needs, hold the baby skin to skin, and play with the baby--all things the child needs for optimal development.

**With help and support, 95% of mothers are physically capable of breastfeeding successfully!<sup>104</sup>**

# The TREMENDOUS benefits of doing what's normal

## Breast milk is much more than just food

Breast milk is not only the baby's food, but it's also the baby's jumpstart on immunity, emotional development, intelligence, self-confidence, and future outcomes. The effects of breastfeeding extend throughout all of childhood, not just infancy, and even into adulthood.

### Breast milk builds the immune system properly.

The thousands of ingredients in breast milk build your baby's immune system and prevent diseases and infections.<sup>50,51</sup> Breast milk: reduces the risk of SIDS;<sup>52-58</sup> and is protective against high blood pressure,<sup>59-61</sup> cholesterol,<sup>62</sup> cancer,<sup>63,64</sup> diabetes,<sup>65-68</sup> obesity,<sup>69-77</sup> ear infections,<sup>78</sup> respiratory problems,<sup>79</sup> urinary tract infections,<sup>80</sup> digestive problems,<sup>51</sup> and allergies.<sup>80</sup>

### Breast milk changes with the growing nutritional needs of the child.

Breast milk contains all the nutrition a baby needs for development during the first six months of life, and provides additional nutrition and immune system protection throughout the process.<sup>51</sup>

### Breastfeeding allows the child to regulate his own body and feedings.

At the breast, the child is able to regulate how much he eats and to stop when he feels full.

### Breastfeeding is associated with positive outcomes.

Breastfeeding leads to better emotional development and stability,<sup>81</sup> protects against mental health problems and addiction,<sup>82-84</sup> and is associated with higher intelligence<sup>85-89</sup> and emotional security.<sup>90</sup>

### Breast milk benefits premature babies

Breast milk is the best medicine for all babies, including premature babies.<sup>91,92</sup> A mother's milk is specially designed to nourish her premature child, preventing the baby from infections and even death.<sup>52, 91-97</sup>



# 5 things you thought you knew about breastfeeding: *Breastfeeding Myths*



## Breastfeeding Myth #1: Breastfeeding is easy and instinctual.

Though breastfeeding is natural, it does require learning and practice. Feeding within the first hour of birth is extremely important for long-term breastfeeding success. Birth medications or latching problems may pose difficulty for initial, immediate breastfeeding, but these difficulties can usually be overcome with the help and support of a lactation consultant.<sup>1-4</sup>

## Breastfeeding Myth #2: Some women can't produce enough milk to breastfeed.

It is very rare that a woman is not able to produce enough milk to breastfeed, even though that concern is often raised.<sup>5-7</sup> Breastfeeding on demand, even at night, right after the child is born guarantees that mothers will not run out of milk.<sup>8</sup> Mothers' breast milk actually adapts in both quantity and quality to the changing nutritional needs of the child.<sup>8</sup>

## Breastfeeding Myth #3: When babies eat frequently, it means they are not satisfied by breast milk alone.

Just like growing children, babies go through growth spurts, causing them to eat more or less frequently at varying intervals during their growth.<sup>9</sup> Breast milk supplies all the vitamins, minerals, nutrition and hydration that babies need.<sup>10,11</sup>

## Breastfeeding Myth #4: Breastfeeding a child for longer than a year is abnormal and bad for the child.

It is completely normal and natural to breastfeed for longer than one year. The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding for at least two years.<sup>12</sup> Even though the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that moms breastfeed for at least one year, only one in five women in the US are breastfeeding at all when their child is one year old.<sup>13</sup> The health benefits the child gains through extended breastfeeding last a lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

# Infant formula myths and misconceptions

## 1. Isn't formula just about as good as breast milk?

Though formula companies have tried, formula cannot compare to mothers' milk.<sup>15</sup> While breast milk has thousands of ingredients (some of which are unknown), formula has less than three dozen.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. Don't the added vitamins in formula protect my baby from disease?

No. Formula has a few vitamins but lacks the hundreds of antibodies,<sup>17</sup> enzymes,<sup>17</sup> and hormones<sup>18</sup> that breast milk provides. Breastfed babies also gain the immune building benefits that their mothers have spent years developing.<sup>17</sup>

## 3. Isn't formula just as safe as breast milk?

No. Infant formula is not sterile and is not strictly monitored by the Food and Drug Administration for toxins, purity, and safety.<sup>19,20</sup> Formula can actually be harmful if it is not prepared properly, as powdered formulas are easily contaminated.<sup>20</sup> Breast milk is always sterile and contains protective factors against infectious agents and everything the body needs to build a good immune system.

## 4. Doesn't formula make babies sleep better?

No. Infant formula does make babies sleep longer and deeper, but this does not mean that they are sleeping "better." In fact, infants are **designed to sleep lightly** and to wake frequently for feedings because they need the nutrients in breastmilk to grow—and they are growing very fast.<sup>21,22</sup> Formula-fed babies are at greater risk of malnourishment and miss the regular wash of agents in breastmilk that help their brains grow well.<sup>21-25</sup>

## 5. Isn't formula more convenient for mom?

For mothers who are readily available to their infants, breast milk is easily accessible and requires no bottles, washing, sterilizing, or storing.<sup>26</sup> Breast milk is always the right temperature and requires no heating.

## 6. Doesn't formula make more economic sense?

Feeding an infant exclusively formula costs more than \$2000/year! In addition to this cost, you must also buy accessories, such as bottle sanitizers, bottles, a bottle warmer, and bottle brushes. Breast milk is free!<sup>27,28</sup>

## 7. Breastfeeding benefits moms too!

Breastfeeding offers many health benefits to moms as well, such as: protection against breast and ovarian cancers,<sup>29-35</sup> diabetes,<sup>36,37</sup> and depressive symptoms.<sup>38-41</sup> Breastfeeding also uses an additional 500 calories per day, helping moms to lose their extra pregnancy weight faster!<sup>42,43</sup> Additionally, breastfeeding releases serotonin and oxytocin in mother and baby, encouraging mother-infant bonding.<sup>44-46</sup>

## 8. Babies who don't breastfeed within 24 hours must be fed formula, right?

Sometimes medical interventions during birth or physical or neurological disorders can hinder a baby's ability to latch onto the breast right away.<sup>47-49</sup> However, with the help of a lactation consultant at the hospital, babies that struggle initially should be breastfeeding in no time! Even if babies have difficulty or are unable to nurse within the first 24 hours, it does not mean the baby must be formula fed.

