

The Benefits of Breastfeeding

☞Lifetime Benefits☞

Colostrum, a mother's first milk:

- ◆ protects against infection and disease
- ◆ has 16 times more protein than formula
- ◆ reduces baby's risk of becoming jaundiced
- ◆ is loaded with antibodies
- ◆ is low in sugar and fat so it is easily digestible
- ◆ helps baby pass meconium
- ◆ "seals" the inside of baby's intestines, preventing the invasion of bacteria and allergy-triggering protein molecules from crossing into baby's blood

Breastmilk for premature babies:

- ◆ enhances brain stem maturation
- ◆ reduces length of hospital stay
- ◆ helps preemies' immature digestive systems develop
- ◆ is safer for preemies than formula
- ◆ increases baby's IQ by 8-15 points over formula-fed preemies
- ◆ is higher in nutrition than breastmilk from a mother who has a full term baby
- ◆ helps the baby to "catch up" on the nutrients it missed out on by not being in the womb
- ◆ reduces stress and improves baby's vital signs, bottle-fed babies exhibit symptoms of stress while feeding
- ◆ helps to protect against necrotizing enterocolitis (gangrene of the intestines), which is 6 to 10 times more common in preemies who are formula-fed

Breastmilk:

- ◆ is precisely designed for human babies
- ◆ increases a child's IQ by 4-7 points
- ◆ increases effectiveness of immunizations
- ◆ is a living tissue
- ◆ requires no refrigeration
- ◆ has antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal properties
- ◆ is less stressful on baby's immature kidneys
- ◆ provides natural pain relief for babies
- ◆ requires no purchased equipment
- ◆ transmits mother's immunities
- ◆ is environmentally specific
- ◆ is always the perfect temperature
- ◆ has over 100 ingredients that cannot be obtained in formula
- ◆ has lactoferrin, an iron-binding protein not available in formula
- ◆ encourages the growth of lactobacillus, a helpful bacteria
- ◆ is produced in sufficient quality by malnourished mothers
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- ◆ has lysozyme, a digestive ingredient, 30 times higher than in formula
- ◆ changes in composition throughout the day and throughout the course of lactation
- ◆ has the correct proportions of fat, carbohydrates, and protein, dependant upon the child's age
- ◆ contains long-chain fatty acids, DHA & ARA, important for brain and retina development
- ◆ tastes differently from feeding to feeding, preparing a baby for a wide variety of food
- ◆ has no synthetic growth hormones, most cow's milk does, and formula is made from cow's milk
- ◆ is the perfect food for sick babies, it's better for them than electrolyte drinks, and does not promote the formation of mucous as formula does
- ◆ contains no genetically engineered material, all 4 soy-based formulas (Carnation, Similac, Isomil, and Enfamil) test positive for genetically engineered ingredients
- ◆ is sensitive to temperature, in cold weather it contains more fat, in hot weather, water content is higher

Breastmilk promotes:

- ◆ enhanced nutrient absorption
- ◆ jaw muscle development
- ◆ overall childhood health
- ◆ visual acuity
- ◆ neurological development
- ◆ psychomotor development
- ◆ hand-to-eye coordination
- ◆ social development
- ◆ baby returning to sleep easier at night after a feeding

Breastmilk reduces the risk of developing or catching:

- ◆ pneumonia
- ◆ eczema
- ◆ Crohn's disease
- ◆ ulcerative colitis
- ◆ multiple sclerosis
- ◆ childhood leukemia
- ◆ Hodgkin's disease
- ◆ juvenile rheumatoid arthritis
- ◆ childhood asthma
- ◆ colic
- ◆ diarrhea
- ◆ cavities
- ◆ bacterial meningitis
- ◆ inflammatory bowel disease
- ◆ childhood obesity
- ◆ inguinal hernia
- ◆ viruses
- ◆ blood poisoning (septicemia)
- ◆ food allergies
- ◆ bacteria
- ◆ intestinal parasites
- ◆ urinary tract infections
- ◆ Type I diabetes for children with a family history of diabetes
- ◆ juvenile onset of Type II diabetes
- ◆ Salmonella
- ◆ ADD &/or ADHD
- ◆ ear infections
- ◆ lung/respiratory infections
- ◆ digestive problems
- ◆ need for orthodontics
- ◆ childhood lymphoma
- ◆ eye infections
- ◆ childhood high blood pressure
- ◆ cancer
- ◆ infant botulism
- ◆ hemophilus influenzae type b bacteria
- ◆ tonsillitis, thereby decreasing the need for a tonsillectomy
- ◆ speech impediments
- ◆ allergies
- ◆ fatal shock
- ◆ childhood bedwetting
- ◆ Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Breastfed babies experience:

- ◆ less physical abuse
- ◆ less sexual abuse
- ◆ less abandonment
- ◆ less spitting up
- ◆ better craniofacial development
- ◆ 1/7th as many allergies as formula-fed babies
- ◆ less chance of cardiopulmonary distress while feeding
- ◆ less offensive diaper, spit-up, and burping odor
- ◆ less hospitalization
- ◆ 44% fewer incidences of infection than formula-fed babies
- ◆ a lesser chance of dying before the age of 3 than formula-fed babies
- ◆ better cell membrane integrity due to long-chain fatty acids only found in breastmilk
- ◆ 10 times the level of lactobacillus (a good bacteria) than formula-fed babies
- ◆ shorter pre- and post-surgical fasting if undergoing surgery (only 3 hours of fasting is required before surgery)

Information compiled by

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Voted Best Doula in Dallas!
2005, 2006, 2007
DallasChild Magazine

☞Benefits for Adults Who Were Breastfed☞

Adults who were breastfed have a decreased risk of:

- ◆ heart disease
- ◆ high cholesterol
- ◆ cancer
- ◆ stroke
- ◆ rheumatoid arthritis
- ◆ obesity
- ◆ high blood pressure
- ◆ acute appendicitis
- ◆ needing vision correction
- ◆ developing auto-immune diseases

☞Benefits for Mother☞

For Mother, breastfeeding:

- ◆ improves carbohydrate metabolism
- ◆ helps to lose weight
- ◆ helps shrink the uterus to pre-pregnancy size
- ◆ promotes bonding with the baby
- ◆ improves mother's response to stress
- ◆ increases self-confidence
- ◆ reduces total cholesterol levels
- ◆ increases the mother's level of calcium after weaning
- ◆ helps to stabilize endometriosis
- ◆ reduces LDL (bad) cholesterol levels
- ◆ increases HDL (good) cholesterol levels
- ◆ reduces triglyceride levels
- ◆ releases prolactin, a hormone which helps the mother relax
- ◆ can usually be continued if the mother takes medication

For Mother, breastfeeding reduces the risk of:

- ◆ postpartum obesity
- ◆ breast cancer
- ◆ ovarian cancer
- ◆ endometrial cancer
- ◆ uterine cancer
- ◆ heart disease
- ◆ osteoporosis
- ◆ hemorrhaging after birth
- ◆ missing work days
- ◆ anemia by delaying ovulation and menstruation
- ◆ needing medication if mother has diabetes
- ◆ urinary tract infections
- ◆ developing Type II diabetes if the mother had gestational diabetes

☞Benefits for Society☞

Breastfeeding is:

- ◆ environmentally friendly, no packaging, no plastics, no waste
- ◆ a natural resource
- ◆ saves money
- ◆ requires no storage or preservation
- ◆ saves tax dollars
- ◆ easy to do while traveling when compared to using formula

Monetary Facts:

- ◆ breastfeeding saves both private, state, and federal money
- ◆ U.S. families spend \$2 billion/year on formula
- ◆ it costs upwards of \$1200/year to feed a baby formula for 1 year
- ◆ \$578 million/year is spent by the U.S. government on formula for the Women, Infant, & Children (WIC) program
- ◆ private and governmental insurers spend a minimum of \$3.6 billion/year to treat medical conditions and diseases which breastmilk helps to prevent

Formula Facts:

- ◆ early soy formulas were iodine deficient and caused goiters
- ◆ formula contains saturated vegetable fats; saturated fats are unhealthy both for adults and infants
- ◆ the importance of zinc was discovered through the problems suffered by babies fed zinc-deficient formula
- ◆ up until 1985 formula cans were soldered with lead, causing daily lead intakes up to 10 times higher than safe levels
- ◆ in the 1950's a processing technique destroyed the B vitamins in a formula, causing convulsions, cerebral palsy and retardation
- ◆ in 1978 a major formula manufacturer removed all salt from some of their formulas, some babies suffered permanent damage

- ◆ formula's main ingredient is cow's milk, which is a foreign protein and intestinal irritant, babies develop antibodies to foreign proteins
- ◆ in 1983 concerns were raised about cancer-causing nitrosamines left on rubber bottle nipples and pacifiers during processing
- ◆ in February of 2006, Mead Johnson and Co. recalled about 41,500 cans of its Gentlease infant formula because they may have contained small metal particles
- ◆ although formula has more iron than breastmilk, it is not readily available and digestible, so a baby gets more iron from breastmilk than from formula
- ◆ the DHA & ARA (for brain and retina development) that is now added to formula has not been proven to assist in brain and retina development like the naturally occurring DHA & ARA in breastmilk
- ◆ in 1990 a study found several formulas with up to 35 times the amount of aluminum found in breastmilk, the worst offenders were formulas specifically for premature infants, who are more susceptible to aluminum toxicity
- ◆ formula has a long history of recalls for bacterial contamination or mis-manufacture that have in many cases resulted in illness, permanent injury, or death not long ago many ingredients in breastmilk were unknown...what else will be discovered in breastmilk that is not in today's formula?

☞Websites for Information on Breastfeeding☞

- ◆ www.drjacknewman.com
- ◆ www.4women.gov/breastfeeding
- ◆ www.la lecheleague.org
- ◆ www.breastfeeding.com
- ◆ www.kellymom.com
- ◆ www.bfmed.org
- ◆ www.pumpingmoms.org
- ◆ www.naturalbeginningsonline.com/momsask.html#breastf
- ◆ www.naturalbeginningsonline.com/breastfeeding.html#files
- ◆ www.health.gov.ab.ca/publicNT37breastfeeding.html

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was compiled from the following sources:

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- ◆ WIC. *Breastfeeding Benefits Chart*
- ◆ WIC. *Mother's Milk for Premature Babies Brochure 13-46*
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- ◆ CIMS (Coalition for Improving Maternity Services). *Breastfeeding is Priceless Publication*
- ◆ La Leche League International. *Common Myths about Breastfeeding*
- ◆ United States Breastfeeding Committee. *Benefits of Breastfeeding* [issue paper]. Raleigh, NC.
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- ◆ Dr. Greene. *Benefits to Breastfeeding*. www.drgreene.org/body.cfm?id=21&action=detail&ref=552
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