

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding is a natural but learned method. Our office supports breastfeeding as the optimal form of nutrition during your child's first year of life.

The American Academy of Pediatrics in their policy statement on breastfeeding states: *“Although economic, cultural, and political pressures often confound the decisions about infant feeding, the AAP firmly adheres to the position that breastfeeding insures the best possible health as well as the best developmental and psychosocial outcomes for the infant.”*

Breastfeeding is a simple principal of positive feedback. When the baby suckles at the mother's breast, a message is sent to the mother's brain to produce a chemical to simulate the production of milk. Any interruption of this feedback cycle (such as the baby sleeping longer than 4 hours, bottle feeding, poor suckling) will interfere with the mother's milk production.

ADVANTAGES OF BREAST MILK AND BREASTFEEDING

Human milk is meant exclusively for infants because not only does it provide all the protein, sugar, fat, and vitamins you baby needs, but it has special benefits that formula cannot match. For example:

- Easy to digest
- No preparation needed
- Costs nothing and is always in supply
- Good for the environment because it does not produce garbage

The act of breastfeeding is also beneficial to the mother and child in the following ways:

- Helps the uterus return to its regular size more quickly
- Helps mothers return to their pre-pregnancy weight more quickly
- Reduces the risk of some maternal cancers, such as ovarian and breast cancer
- Builds bone strength for mothers
- Enhances bonding and development
- Promotes infant eye and jaw muscle development

In addition, human milk provides the baby with protective substances so they are **less likely to experience:**

- Ear Infections
- Allergies
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Respiratory infection (pneumonia, bronchiolitis)
- Meningitis
- SIDS
- Obesity

Therefore, the longer the mother breastfeeds, the greater the benefits for her and her baby.

WHAT TO EXPECT WITH NURSING

Breastfeeding is a natural, but **LEARNED FEEDING METHOD**. The first TWO weeks of nursing can be more difficult than bottle feeding because it takes time for the baby and mother to learn how to nurse. **Most babies will regain their birth weight by 3 weeks of life.**

FEEDING TIPS

- Frequent daytime feeds every 2 to 3 hours during the first week of life will encourage babies to sleep for longer periods at night.
- As the breasts produce more milk, they may temporarily feel full and uncomfortable. To soften breasts and stimulate milk flow, it is helpful to apply a hotpack* to the chest for 10 to 15 minutes prior to feeding. Massage and hand express a few drops of milk from the breast to encourage the baby to latch on.
- You may find these techniques helpful for sore nipples:
 - Hotpacks to breasts for 10-15 minutes before feeds.
 - Check for proper positioning of the baby at breast.
 - Expose nipples to air after feedings.
 - Use a 1:1 ratio of warm water and hydrogen peroxide to your nipples three times daily after feeding until relief is achieved.
- The use of artificial nipples (pacifier and or/bottle) may interfere with breastfeeding. Having the baby suck on your fingers will satisfy your baby's sucking needs.
- It is best to offer both breasts to your baby at each feeding.
- Undress your sleepy baby while feeding.
- Call our office if your baby often feeds longer than 30 minutes per feeding.
- For the first week of life have your baby wear a soft hat between feeds to help conserve calories.

*To make a hotpack, place a large towel in a large plastic bag. Heat water either in the microwave or on the stovetop until almost boiling and the pour over the towel in the bag. Fold the top down of the bag and tape closed. Apply the hotpack directly across your entire bare chest. Be careful, as this may be too hot. If so, place the hotpack over your clothing until you can comfortably apply to your bare skin. If the bag is large enough, attempt to get heat under your arms as well.

MEDICATIONS AND BREASTFEEDING

The majority of medications are safe for the breastfeeding mother and her baby. Medications that are NOT safe are "street drugs" like cocaine, marijuana, heroin, alcohol, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP, known as angel dust), anti-cancer drugs, some anti-psychotic drugs, like Lithium and some diagnostic agents (iodine, technetium, radioactive gallium). Please call our office with your questions regarding medications while breastfeeding.

EQUIPMENT

Pumps are a convenience, but not a necessity for breastfeeding success.

LACTATION EDUCATORS

Other Questions? Please call us at our office, 716-433-2674 Staff are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a weeks.