

Breastfeeding Benefits

Breast milk is the best food for all babies. Breastfeeding has many benefits for both mother and baby and is a rewarding experience.

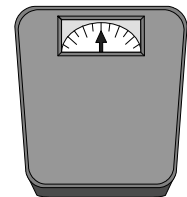
Benefits for Baby:

- ♥ Breast milk provides all the nutrients for good growth and development. Breast milk is easy to digest. Breast milk is better than any infant formula.
- ♥ Breast milk protects baby against common infant illnesses. Antibodies in breast milk protect the baby against diarrhea, ear infections, respiratory infections, and other illnesses.
- ♥ Breastfed babies have fewer allergies than formula-fed babies. Breast milk provides protection against asthma, food allergies, and hay fever.
- ♥ Breastfeeding reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- ♥ Breast milk tastes better than formula. Formula is bland. Breast milk is sweet and tastes like the food you have eaten. Bowel movements smell better, too.



Benefits for Mom:

- ♥ Breastfeeding promotes a special bond between you and your baby. Nothing is more comforting for an infant of any age than being held close and cuddled while breastfeeding.
- ♥ Breastfeeding decreases your risk of ovarian and breast cancer. Studies show the longer you breastfeed, the lower your risk for these cancers.
- ♥ Breastfeeding helps you lose weight after delivery. Breastfeeding helps your uterus shrink quickly to pre-pregnancy size. Your body uses about 500 calories a day making milk.



- ♥ Breastfeeding your baby helps you feel good about yourself. It is the best feeling to see your baby grow and know you provided the nutrition.
- ♥ Breastfeeding is convenient. You don't need to heat bottles in the middle of the night. Breast milk is always available and always the right temperature.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding exclusively for the first 6 months after birth and continuing for 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mom and baby desire.

For baby's and my health, I will: _____