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Why Breastfeed?

Benefits of Breastfeeding for Mothers and Babies

- Reduces a baby's risk of ear infections, diarrhea, and respiratory illnesses.
- Reduces risk of childhood obesity.
- Delays the return of menstrual periods.
- May aid in spacing pregnancies.
- Reduces the risk of breast and ovarian cancers.
- Creates a strong bond between mother and child.
- Increases a mother's self-esteem.



Benefits of Breastfeeding for Families

- Saves the family budget hundreds of dollars.
- Saves on health care costs.
- Breastfeeding creates a healthier society.

Encouraging Your Family's Support

- Prepare your partner and other family members in advance and explain that you need support.
- Highlight the important benefits of breastfeeding.
- Emphasize how much money you'll save. Breastfeeding can save over \$300 a month – money that could be used for food, housing costs, savings, or a vacation.
- Point out to your partner that breastfeeding will give your child the best start in life, with effects that last well into childhood and adulthood.
- If your partner seems jealous of the closeness between you and your baby, suggest that he talk or sing to the baby, or give the baby a bath.



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Tips for Preparing to Breastfeed

- Read about breastfeeding during your pregnancy so you will know what to do once your baby is in your arms.
- Get good prenatal care to help assure that you carry your baby to term so he/she won't need special care.
- Before you give birth, tell your health care provider about you want to breastfeed and ask about any medical issues that might affect your ability to breastfeed.
- Talk to friends who have breastfed, or attend a breastfeeding support group (such as La Leche League) so you can meet other breastfeeding mothers.
- Breastfeed your baby within the first few hours after delivery because the sucking instinct is very strong at this time.
- Keep your baby in your hospital room with you so you can breastfeed often and get to know one another.
- Ask if your hospital has a breastfeeding specialist who could help you if you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding once you start.



Breastfeeding in Public

- Minnesota law protects a mother's right to breastfeed in any public or private location she and her baby are otherwise allowed to be even if part of her breast shows while feeding her baby.
- Some mothers feel uncomfortable breastfeeding at first, but become more confident as they gain experience.
 - You can use a nursing cover or blanket to cover yourself and your baby, find a sitting area or public restroom and talk to other mothers about how they manage these situations.
 - Other people usually don't even notice since the baby is quiet and doesn't attract attention.



Building Healthier Babies

612-673-3048



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