

THE BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

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There are many excellent reasons to choose breast feeding. One of the most important is that human breast milk is made by a mothers' body for human babies. There are no other types of milk, not even infant formula that can match the same nutrition as breast milk.

Human milk is easy for baby to digest because there is the right amount of protein, carbohydrate, and fat put together for your baby to grow and thrive. There are over 100 nutrients and other elements in breast milk that are great for baby.

Antibodies in breast milk can help baby fight some infections causing breathing, intestinal, and skin illnesses. Other antibodies passed on to baby in breast milk help protect from infections like polio and coxsackie viruses.

Mothers also benefit! Every time you feed your baby breast milk, your brain tells your uterus to contract. With each contraction the uterus returns to a normal pre-pregnancy size.

Breast milk is always in a clean container, fresh, just the right temperature, and ready for baby when the need is there. It is free and the savings great, with no bottles to clean or infant formula to buy. Babies can be breastfed for up to 2 years and more.

Breast feeding helps the baby to have a good jaw position and better muscle strength in the face. The baby's teeth may also stay healthier.

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits is the bond between mother and baby. Feeding time allows mom to have a quiet break away from all the other things that take up time in the day. Baby sees best from the distance from moms breast to mom's face. This helps baby feel safe and loved.

Take time—allow your body to nourish your baby with the perfect food.

Remember, your body is doing what it is made to do. Enjoy the special time with baby.

RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY

- www.healthlinkalberta.ca has information on breastfeeding your baby, which is also available in “From Here Through Maternity”, available from healthcare provider.
- The Calgary Health Link for 24 hours nurse advice and health information 403-943-LINK (5465)
- Motherisk 416-813-6780 or www.motherisk.org this resource can help with advice about taking medication while breastfeeding.
- La Leche League 403-242-0277 or www.la lecheleague.orgcan can help with mother-to-mother breastfeeding support.



Best Beginning is a free service for all pregnant women and their supporters who:

- are living on a low income
- need information to make healthy choices during pregnancy
- face language or cultural barriers

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Call 403-228-8221 for more information.