

## Breastfeeding Facts: Why should I breastfeed my baby?



### Breastfeeding is best for mom!

*Compared to formula feeding moms, breastfeeding moms...*

- are less likely to get breast, ovarian, or endometrial cancer.
- bleed less after delivery.
- recover faster after delivery.
- lose weight faster—breastfeeding burns around 500 calories per day.

***“Just to think that my baby is getting everything she needs from my breast milk makes me feel good as a mother and empowered.” ~ Kanedra, Rochester***

### There are risks to NOT breastfeeding

*Research shows that formula fed babies are sick more often than breastfed babies. Formula fed babies are more likely to...*

- die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (called SIDS or Crib death).
- develop diabetes later in life.
- have allergies and asthma.
- get ear and respiratory infections.
- become fat or obese.
- have vomiting and diarrhea.

*Formula...*

- does not protect a baby from illnesses so you may spend more time and money on doctors visits.
- is not automatically ready when your baby is hungry—formula needs to be measured, heated, and bottles need to be sterilized.
- is expensive. If you are on WIC, you will not get enough formula to last the month.
- can be contaminated and be recalled.

***“[When I breastfeed] I feel closer to him, like I’m bonding with him still. It’s a good feeling.” ~ Dominique, Rochester***

### Did you know...?

- Human milk is made for human babies. Formula is made from cow’s milk or soy beans.
- Your body makes breast milk even if you don’t breastfeed.
- Breast milk is the only food or drink your baby needs for the first six months of life.
- Breast milk changes as your baby grows so it is always the perfect food.
- Breast milk changes flavor depending on what you have eaten.
- Breast milk has antibodies in it that keep your baby healthy.
- Breastfeeding helps you develop a strong bond with your baby.
- Breastfeeding helps your baby reach his or her full potential.

**A few more interesting facts about breastfeeding...**

- Almost all mothers can breastfeed successfully.
- Your breast milk is the perfect food for your baby even if your diet isn't perfect.
- Even if you smoke, breastfeeding is better for your baby than not breastfeeding (to quit smoking, call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) – it's free and confidential).
- Formula is not as good as breast milk.
- According to New York State law:
  - You have the right to breastfeed your baby anywhere you are allowed to be—in the mall, at a restaurant, even at church.
  - Your employer is required to give you break time and a place to pump for your baby while you are at work.
- You can breastfeed even if you have a C-section.
- Breastfeeding does not ruin the shape of your breasts.
- All breasts make milk – size doesn't matter.
- You can continue to breastfeed after your baby gets teeth.
- It is ok to breastfeed for 2, 3 or even 4 years.

***"I have no shame breastfeeding out in public...It's healthy and it's natural." ~ Kenya, Rochester***

**Have a birth plan:**

*A birth plan is a written outline of your wishes for your labor and birth. Share it with your doctor or midwife, the labor nurse, your partner and family.*

*The following list includes some items that will help you get the best start to breastfeeding, so you may want to include them in your birth plan.*

- Put your baby skin-to-skin (on your chest) immediately after birth.
- Start breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
- Breastfeed your baby any time he or she seems hungry.
- Make sure your doctor and the nurses know you are breastfeeding and ask them not to give your baby any formula or pacifiers.
- Keep your baby in your room with you 24 hours a day.
- Ask your friends and family members to wait to visit you after you are home.
- Ask the nurses or lactation consultants for help with breastfeeding if you need it.

***"I'm a first time mom. I don't know exactly what I'm doing, but I have a hint that I'm doing something right [by breastfeeding]. My baby is growing!" ~ Maria, Rochester***

**If you have questions about breastfeeding...**

*Here are some phone numbers and websites for help with breastfeeding:*

- WIC Peer Counselors: for more information on breastfeeding your baby or to be referred to a Peer Counselor, please call the WIC Breastfeeding Help Line at 585-753-5640 or search <http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org/>
- National Breastfeeding Helpline: call 1-800-994-9662
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: [www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding)
- National Institutes of Health: [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/breastfeeding.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/breastfeeding.html)