



A Physical Activity Resource

FEEDING MY INFANT: BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding

- Human milk is the preferred food for infants.
- Exclusive breastfeeding is advised for the first 6 months of life, as able.
- After 6 months and as an infant starts eating solids, breastfeeding should continue through the infant's first 12 months of life and until it is no longer desired by the mother and infant.
- Breastfeeding does not have to be "all or nothing." Human milk and iron-fortified infant formula feeding can be combined, known as mixed feeding.
- Infants who are exclusively breastfed or mixed fed will need a vitamin D supplement (400 IU/day).
- Infants should typically be fed on demand, when the infant shows signs of hunger, unless medically advised otherwise.

Expressing Human Milk

- "Expressing" is the removal of human milk either by hand or breast pump.
- Expressing human milk can help relieve overly full (engorged) breasts and can provide milk to the infant when mother and infant are apart.

MORE INFORMATION ON EXPRESSING HUMAN MILK CAN BE FOUND AT:
<https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/pumping-and-hand-expression-basics>

Breastfeeding Offers Benefits to Both Mother and Infant

- Breastfed infants have a lower risk of getting some infections and diseases such as asthma, ear infections, and type 2 diabetes.
- For most infants, human milk is easier to digest than infant formula.
- Mothers that breastfeed have a lower risk of getting certain types of breast and ovarian cancers, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes.
- Breastfeeding promotes mother-infant bonding.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON INFANT FEEDING CHECK OUT THESE FACTSHEETS:

FEEDING MY INFANT: BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

Donor Human Milk
Infant Formula
Signs of Hunger/Fullness
Proper Handling/Storage of Human Milk

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Maternal Nutrition While Breastfeeding

- For the most part, nutrition recommendations for mothers who are breastfeeding is very similar to recommendations for the general population. A variety of foods and beverages from all of food groups should be consumed.
- Mothers who are breastfeeding have an increased need for iodine and choline.
 - Some good food sources of iodine are dairy products, eggs, seafood, and iodized table salt
 - Some good food sources of choline are dairy products, eggs, meat, some seafood, beans, peas, and lentils
- Eating seafood while breastfeeding is encouraged, avoiding choices high in mercury such as shark, swordfish, and king mackerel.

MORE INFORMATION ON SAFE SEAFOOD CONSUMPTION CAN BE FOUND AT:
<https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish>

- It is advised to avoid alcohol and limit caffeine intake while breastfeeding. Mothers considering consuming alcohol and/or caffeine while breastfeeding should talk to their health care provider.
- Unless medically advised, foods do not need to be limited or avoided while breastfeeding to prevent the infant from developing a food allergy.

Overcoming Challenges

- There are many factors that can impact the ability to breastfeed, and these can change as an infant develops. Some of these challenges cannot be prevented, but there are many tips, resources, and supports to help overcome potential barriers.
- A fed baby is best, so if challenges cannot be overcome, discuss with your health care provider to determine the best alternative.

Resources

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Support
www.wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov
International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA)
*Find a Lactation Consultant Directory
www.ilca.org
La Leche League International (LLL)
www.llli.org
La Leche League USA (LLL USA)
*Breastfeeding Support Meeting Locator
www.lllusa.org
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Healthy Children
www.healthychildren.org
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies - The Montana Coalition (HMHB-MT)
*Linking Infants & Families to Supports (LIFTS) Online Resource Guide
www.hmhb-lifts.org
Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) 2020-2025
www.dietaryguidelines.gov
Women, Office of Women's Health (OWH)
www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding
National Women's Health and Breastfeeding Helpline
1-800-994-9662

