

Breastfeeding

Best for Baby, Best for Mom

Whether you are a new or expecting Mom, you want to give your baby the best care possible. One of the best things only you can do is breastfeed.



**Helping moms
breastfeed
successfully.**

The U.S. Surgeon General recommends that babies be fed breast milk for the first 6 months and breastfeeding to continue for 12 months, because breast milk provides the right balance of nutrients to help an infant grow and develop. Mother's milk has just the right amount of fat, sugar, water and protein that is needed and most babies find it easier to digest breast milk than formula or cow's milk. Breastfed babies tend to gain less unnecessary weight and premature babies do better when breastfed compared to premature babies who are fed formula. The physical contact from breastfeeding is important to newborns and can help them feel more secure, warm and comforted.

Breast milk is good for baby as it has antibodies to help infants fight off illness, such as diarrhea and ear infections. It enhances the immune system, as breastfed babies have a better response to immunizations against diseases, such as polio and diphtheria, and it builds up resistance to infections like the common infant respiratory infection. Many studies show that breastfed infants have lower rates of chronic childhood diseases like diabetes, cancer, allergies and asthma.

Breastfeeding is also good for mom as it uses up extra calories, making it easier to lose pregnancy weight. Breastfeeding requires mothers to take some relaxed time for themselves and their babies. It increases self-confidence for mom and allows bonding to occur with the baby. A mother can give her baby immediate satisfaction when the baby is hungry, as there are no bottles to warm and no formula to measure and mix, thereby reducing stress. And a mother knows her baby is safe, because milk straight from the breast is always sterile and the perfect temperature. Breastfeeding helps the uterus to get back to its original size and lessens bleeding after child birth. Breastfeeding exclusively delays the return of normal ovulation and menstrual cycles. It also lowers the risk of breast cancer and may lower the risk of ovarian cancer.

Breastfeeding is not recommended for all mothers. Women should not breastfeed if they take drugs, do not control their alcohol intake or use certain medicines such as mood stabilizers or migraine medicine. In addition, women with infections that are transmitted through breast milk, such as HIV or tuberculosis, also should not breastfeed.

While breastfeeding isn't the only option for feeding your baby, every mother has the potential to succeed and make it a wonderful experience.

Breastfeeding classes are sponsored by WFBMC's ActionHealth. Lactation Rooms are available for breastfeeding mothers at the WHCoE and at WFUBMC. For more information about the classes or rooms, visit our breastfeeding page at www.wakehealth.edu/Research/WHCOE/Breastfeeding-Program.htm.

This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her instructions.

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For more information about women's health issues, stop by our Resource Center at 2000 West First Street, Piedmont Plaza II, 1st Floor, Winston Salem, NC 27104, visit our website at <http://www.wakehealth.edu/WHCOE/> or contact us at (336) 713-4220.