

BREASTMILK is naturally good for your baby. Once your child is born and you are prepared to breastfeed, you are providing your baby the first valuable gift, the very best nutrition. Breastfeeding has lifelong benefits, in addition to better brain development, less chances of being sick, and the child will benefit later in life with lower risks of hypertension, obesity and diabetes. Breastfed children are more psychologically secure.

Common Questions Concerning Breastfeeding:

Is breastfeeding difficult?

Breastfeeding takes practice. Once you have mastered the technique, breastfeeding can be the simplest process.

What are the components of breast milk?

The basic compositions are water, lipids, lactose, oligosaccharides, glycoproteins, enzymes, antibodies, whey and casein, vitamins, minerals and more.

Breast milk is considered to have the perfect combination of nutrients.

Lipids are needed for the development of the nervous system, to cover and protect nerve cells. The enzyme lipase breaks down milk fat into smaller globules, allowing better absorption and digestion.

Lactose provides energy. Lactose is also converted to lactic acids by *Lactobacillus* which prevents the growth of certain harmful bacteria.

Oligosaccharides, Lysozymes, Secretory IgA, macrophages and many more bio-protective factors are not found in infant formula. Several growth factors and hormones are not reproducible in formula.

If you decide to breastfeed, what kind of instructions could we offer you?

While you are pregnant, you will have information/discussions about feeding your baby, including the benefits of breastfeeding.

After your baby is born, we will help you initiate breastfeeding as soon as possible.

We encourage your baby to be with you at all times.

We will show you how to hold your baby and how to help with latching on. This is to make sure that your baby gets a good start and feeding is not painful.

You will be given accurate advice about when to feed, how often to feed and how to check if your baby is getting enough milk.

You will get explanations on how to produce more milk and how to express your milk.

Your baby will not be given water or formula milk unless needed for medical reasons.

Help does not end once you leave the hospital. We will follow your progress and will give you advice to help you establish these beneficial skills.

When do mothers start producing milk?

The breasts change during pregnancy to accommodate breast milk, ready to be released by infants suckling after birth. More milk will be produced by regular removal of milk from the breast.

What is so special about breastfeeding?

The proven benefits of breastfeeding, even for a short period, include lower risks of gastrointestinal and respiratory illness, decreased incidence of diabetes, cardiovascular and immune diseases. Major benefits for mother include reduced blood loss after childbirth (hormones help the uterus to contract), and if continued for at least 6 months breastfeeding will increase weight loss after pregnancy.

What is the best position while breastfeeding?

There is no one particular position. The best position is the one that is comfortable to the mother and allows the baby to latch-on, suckle and swallow easily. Usually, when the baby rotates her head to latch-on, it will be more difficult to coordinate sucking and swallowing. It is alright to use pillows and footstools to help support you body and your baby. Remember to raise your baby towards the breast, not the breast to your baby. When a baby is latched properly, adequate amount of milk is obtained, swallowing is audible and nipple soreness is minimal.

How often should a newborn baby breastfeed?

Breastfeed when baby shows signs of hunger such as awakening and searching for the breast, sucking on the hands or lips. Do not wait for crying since crying comes when he is very hungry. During the first few weeks, most babies will breastfeed 8-12 times per day. Wake up a sleepy baby to nurse by changing the diaper or tickling his feet, if it's been more than 4 hours after previous feeding. Eventually, mother and baby will adjust to his feeding frequency and duration. Many parents are concerned that their baby is not getting enough milk because it is not possible to see how much milk the baby consumes. How do we know if baby is getting adequate amounts? If there are at least 6 wet diapers per day with clear and pale yellow urine, the stools are yellow/light brown, and there is a steady weight gain after 2 weeks of age are all indications of the baby getting adequate supply of milk.

How do we maintain milk supply?

Each time the baby is nursed, messages are sent to the brain, where hormones are released and milk produced. The more emptying of breast milk, the more the milk supply is build up. Use hand expressing and/or electric pump to express your milk when your breasts are engorged and starting to hurt, and when you need to be away from your baby e.g. going back to work or going to a social function. It is safe to store extra breast milk in the refrigerator at 2-4 degrees Celsius for 3-5 days, or 1 week in the ice compartment of the refrigerator or up to 3 months in the freezer. Frozen breast milk should be thawed and used within 24 hours. Do not defrost breast milk in the microwave.

© 2012 Peggy Wongsa MD

11302 Fallbrook Dr. Ste. 305, Houston, TX 77065 – (281) 897-1122