

# BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

## BENEFITS FOR BABY

- Breast milk is the most complete nutrition for babies. A mother's milk has just the right amount of fat, sugar, water, and protein needed for a baby's development and growth. Most babies find it easier to digest breast milk than formula.



- Breast milk has agents (called [antibodies](#)) that help protect babies from bacteria and viruses. Babies who are breastfed for at least six months are less likely to have ear infections, diarrhea, or respiratory illnesses.

- Breastfed babies have lower rates of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in the first year of life, and lower rates of diabetes, leukemia, obesity, and asthma later in life.



## BENEFITS FOR MOM

- Breastfeeding uses up extra calories, making it easier to lose weight after pregnancy. It also decreases any bleeding a woman may have after giving birth.
- Breastfeeding delays the return of normal ovulation and menstrual cycles. (You should still talk with your doctor or nurse about birth control choices.)
- Breastfeeding lowers the risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and diabetes.
- Breastfeeding makes your life easier. It saves time and money. There is no formula to buy or mix, and no bottles to warm in the middle of the night!
- A mother can give her baby immediate satisfaction by providing her breast milk when her baby is hungry. Breastfeeding gives a mother some quiet relaxed time for herself and her baby.



## BENEFITS FOR SOCIETY

- Breastfeeding saves on health care costs. Breastfed babies need fewer doctor visits, prescriptions, and hospitalizations.
- Breastfeeding contributes to a more productive workforce. Breastfeeding mothers miss less work because their babies are sick less often. Employer medical costs are lower and employee productivity is higher.
- Breastfeeding is better for our environment. There is less trash and plastic waste compared to formula use.





**All babies are born  
to breastfeed!**



**More information about breastfeeding  
is available at:**

**Maryland Department of Health**  
[https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/mch/Pages/bf\\_home.aspx](https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/mch/Pages/bf_home.aspx)  
410-767-6713

**Maryland WIC Program**  
<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/wic/Pages/breastfeeding-services.aspx>  
1-800-242-4WIC

**U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services**  
[www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding)

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
<https://healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/default.aspx>

**La Leche League International**  
[www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org)

**National Breastfeeding Helpline**  
1-800-994-9662

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