



Rotaract Club of the Caduceus

World Breast Feeding Week



Breast Milk

... The Best gift that a mother can give her baby

Benefits of Breast Milk

- 1. Nutritional superiority:** Breast milk contains all nutrients required for a normal growth and development of the baby, in optimum proportions and in a form that is easily digested and absorbed.
- 2. Carbohydrates:** Mother's milk is rich in carbohydrates especially lactose, which not only is the essential source of energy for the baby but also helps in the absorption of calcium and enhances the growth of necessary bacteria present in the intestine.
- 3. Proteins:** The protein content of breast milk is low as the baby cannot absorb and utilize a high protein load.
Also in terms of quality, mother's milk contains lactalbumin and lactoglobulin which is easily absorbed by the baby and low in casein (found in cattle milk) not absorbed by the baby. Human milk also contains essential amino acids necessary for optimum functioning of the baby's brain which are lacking in cow's milk and formula.
- 4. Fats:** Breast milk is rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) which is necessary for the normal development of the child's brain.
It also contains omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids which are important for formation of a number of hormones in the body.
- 5. Vitamins and Minerals:** Mother's milk contains all vitamins and minerals necessary for baby's need for the first 6 months of life.
Although low in iron content as compared to cow's milk, iron from mother's milk is better absorbed as compared to cow's milk.
- 6. Water:** Breast milk contains 88% water. Therefore adequately breast fed baby does not require any additional water for first 6 months of life even in summer months.
Also the right amount of water is necessary for the optimum functioning of the baby's kidney.
- 7. Greater Immune Health:** During breastfeeding, antibodies pass to the baby. This is one of the most important features of colostrum, the breast milk created for newborns.
Breast milk contains several anti-infective factors such as bile salt stimulated lipase (protecting against amoebic infections), lactoferrin (which binds to iron and inhibits the growth of intestinal bacteria and immunoglobulin A protecting against microorganisms)

8. **Protection against Infection:** A breast fed baby is 14.2 times less likely to die of diarrhea and 3.6 times less likely to die of respiratory infections.
Breastfed babies have better arousal from sleep at 2–3 months. Breast fed babies have half the risk of Sudden Infant death of the baby which occurs around the same period in sleep.
9. **Protection against other illnesses:** Breastfed babies have lesser risk of allergy, ear infections and orthodontic problems.
They also have lower risk of diabetes, heart disease and lymphoma in later life.
10. **Less childhood obesity:** Breastfed babies have lesser risk of developing obesity in later childhood.
11. **Development of jaw muscles:** Breastfed babies have better development of jaw muscles as compared with bottle fed babies.
12. **Higher Intelligence:** Breastfed babies have a higher IQ than those babies which were given other forms of milk. Also breastfed babies have better bonding with their mothers.

Benefits to Mothers:

1. **Bonding:** Hormones released during breastfeeding help to strengthen the maternal bond.
Teaching partners how to manage common difficulties is associated with higher breastfeeding rates.
Support for a mother while breastfeeding can assist in familial bonds and help build a paternal bond between father and child.
2. **Hormone release:** Breastfeeding releases oxytocin and prolactin, hormones that relax the mother and make her feel more nurturing toward her baby.
Breastfeeding soon after giving birth increases the mother's oxytocin levels, making her uterus contract more quickly and reducing bleeding.
3. **Convenient and cost-saving:** Breast feeding is most convenient and time saving. Mother doesn't need to carry feeds along.
Also it is a cost-effective way of feeding the infant, can be practiced in the poorest of families.
4. **Natural Contraceptive:** Although imperfect, but if the mother is exclusively breast feeding the baby and not resumed menses, there is no need for any other contraceptive during initial 6 months after delivery.
5. **Weight loss:** Breastfeeding is an effective way of shedding the extra weight that the mother has gained during pregnancy.
6. **Long-term benefits:** For breastfeeding women, long-term health benefits include:
 - Less risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and endometrial cancer.
 - Lactation for at least 24 months is associated with a 23% lower risk of coronary heart disease.
 - Breastfeeding diabetic mothers require less insulin.
 - Reduced risk of metabolic syndrome
 - Women who breast feed for a longer duration have a lower risk for contracting rheumatoid arthritis than women who breast feed for a shorter duration or who have never breast fed.

Rtr. Resham Parikh
(President)

Rtr. Sanket Shah
(Secretary)

Rtr. Udit Dalmia
(VP and PDD)
9821888645