

Protect your health. Prevent disease.

# Breastfeeding...

*the healthy choice  
for moms & babies.*



Breastfeeding is more than a lifestyle choice — it is an important health choice.

## **So Many Benefits – for Baby, Mom and the Community!**

- **Breastmilk is a natural health shield for baby.** Breast milk has disease-fighting cells called antibodies that help protect infants from germs, illness, and even SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Breastfeeding lowers an infant's risk of ear infections, stomach viruses, respiratory infections, diarrhea, asthma, type 1 & 2 diabetes, and obesity. These health properties have not been able to be mimicked by formula companies.
- **Breastfeeding helps mom with weight loss and protects her health.** Breastfeeding burns extra calories, making it easier to lose weight after giving birth. Breastfeeding lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancers, and promotes healthy bones.
- **Breastfeeding saves health care costs and improves productivity.** Breastfed babies need fewer doctor visits, prescriptions, and hospitalizations. Breastfeeding contributes to a more productive workforce. Breastfeeding mothers miss less work because their infants are sick less often. Employer medical costs are lower and employee productivity is higher.
- **Breastfeeding is “green.”** Breastfeeding is better for our environment. There is less trash and plastic waste compared to formula use.
- Read more about the benefits of human milk and breastfeeding at:  
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/Breastfeeding/index.cfm?page=227>

## **Breastfeeding Recommendations:**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive breastfeeding (no water, juice, or other foods/formula) for approximately the first 6 months of life. Once solids are introduced at or after 6 months, it is recommended that breastfeeding continue as the primary nutrient supply for at least 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mother and baby desire.



## Need Help Breastfeeding?

- Have basic breastfeeding questions? Call the National Breastfeeding Hotline supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS): 1-800-994-9662
- Find a local La Leche League support group: <http://www.llusa.org/web/Nebraska.html>

## It Takes a Village

The phrase “it takes a village to raise a child” is especially true when it comes to breastfeeding success. Moms who are supported at home, work, by their healthcare provider, and in their community, are more likely to try and sustain breastfeeding. Here are some suggestions to make it easier for moms to breastfeed:

<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage family and spouse support for breastfeeding</li> <li>• Attend breastfeeding support groups as a family</li> </ul>
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish breastfeeding support for school employees, teen moms and school visitors</li> <li>• Include breastfeeding education in health education curriculum</li> <li>• Join (or start) a school wellness team to address breastfeeding education and promotion</li> </ul>
<b>Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a workplace policy that states the mother’s right to express milk or breastfeed at work</li> <li>• Provide a secure and clean facility for expression of breast milk (other than a restroom)</li> <li>• Establish a worksite wellness group that addresses breastfeeding support for mothers returning to work</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish maternity-care practices that support breastfeeding</li> <li>• Establish a written breastfeeding policy that is communicated to all health care team members</li> <li>• Provide one-on-one and group peer support for breastfeeding</li> <li>• Provide access to International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs)</li> </ul>

## Join In!

To get involved in Nebraska breastfeeding efforts, join the Nebraska Breastfeeding Coalition. Learn more at: [www.nebreastfeeding.org](http://www.nebreastfeeding.org)

## Optimize your Health

Breastfeeding is one of six national strategies supported by research to protect health and prevent disease. The other strategies include being physically active, eating fruits and vegetables, drinking less sugar-sweetened beverages, reducing food portions, and watching less TV. To learn more, visit: [www.dhhs.ne.gov/nafh](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/nafh)

## Resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/>  
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/Breastfeeding/>

