

# #1: Benefits of Breastfeeding

## Prenatal Education



### Breastfeeding Benefits Babies

- Breastfeeding gives your baby all the nutrition, growth factors and disease protection needed for normal growth, as well as protection throughout your baby's life.
- Breastfeeding may help protect against obesity.
- Breastfeeding is comforting for babies.
- Formula provides no disease protection.
- Formula comes from dairy or soy sources which can potentially lead to allergies and diabetes.

### Breastfeeding Benefits Mothers

- Women who breastfeed have decreased rates of breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, high blood pressure and heart disease.
- Women who breastfeed return to their pre-pregnancy weight more quickly.

### Breastfeeding Saves Time and Money

- Breastfeeding is free and can be done anywhere.
- Formula costs more than \$1,700 a year, plus supplies.
- Formula takes time to buy, mix and prepare for feeding.

## Breastfeeding gives your baby comfort and nutrition

- Breastfeeding gives your baby the comfort of being close to you as well as the comfort of sucking. Breastfeeding makes you and your baby feel relaxed.
- Breastfeeding decreases stress hormones in your baby and in your body, too!
- Breastfeeding has pain-relieving properties for your baby.
- Breast milk contains everything your baby needs to grow and develop the healthiest body possible. Your breast milk changes as your baby grows to give baby the nutrition he or she needs! Since the nutrients come from a human source, they perfectly match your baby's digestive needs and are thus digested easily and rapidly.

## Breastfeeding protects your baby against disease

- Breastfed infants receive protection that lasts a lifetime. It lowers the incidence of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and serious diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

- Formulas come from a dairy or soybean source which gives your baby foreign proteins that are difficult for them to digest and may lead to an increase in allergies, diabetes, ear and respiratory infections, gastrointestinal diseases, colds and flu.
- Formula has no disease-fighting or protective components.
- Formula fed babies have a greater incidence of ear infections, diarrhea, respiratory illness, gastrointestinal illness and SIDS.

## Breastfeeding benefits your health

- Women who breastfeed have decreased rates of breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, high blood pressure and heart disease.
- Breastfeeding will help you lose weight, and it helps to reduce postpartum bleeding by triggering a hormone that helps your uterus contract.

## Breastfeeding promotes your baby's growth and development

- Breast milk contains enzymes and hormones that help baby's digestion and promote healthy growth.
- The milk of mothers whose infants were born prematurely has more protein and other nutrients specially needed to meet the growth needs of a premature baby.
- Breast milk contains important fats that help your baby's brain grow. Breastfed babies often have higher intelligence scores. These important fats also help your baby to have better vision.
- Formula does not have these enzymes or growth promoting factors. Formula fed babies are more likely to be overweight, and develop diabetes and heart disease as adults.

## Breastfeeding saves you time and money

- Formula costs more than \$1,700 a year, not including supplies. It also takes time to buy and mix formula, and wash and prepare bottles. Breast milk is always fresh, free and ready to feed.
- Since breastfed babies get sick less often, it means less money spent on doctor visits, medicines and hospitalizations.
- It also means parents have less time lost from work to stay home with a sick baby.

Breastfeeding is the gift of a lifetime—  
A gift that only a mother can give.