

Breastfeeding...

Baby's Best Start!

Keep It Up!

You have taken care during your pregnancy to grow a healthy baby. You watched what you ate, went to your health care provider regularly and made good decisions to ensure your child has a strong start in life.

Mother's milk has so many advantages over artificial milk and you can continue to give your baby the benefits of breastfeeding even if you have to return to work. In every community there are people who are waiting for your call, waiting to help you! Ask your health care provider or WIC counselor to help you find a lactation consultant, a breastfeeding class, breastpump or a support group. Or in Washington State, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588, where Information and Referral Specialists are available to help you find the resources you need.

Your breastmilk is the perfect food for your child and has many unique and special qualities that cannot be reproduced in artificial milk.

Did you know...

Breastmilk enhances a baby's health, growth and development. It is the ideal nutrition for your baby in the first six months of life and continues to protect and

nourish your baby after six months of life. It changes day to day meet your child's changing nutritional needs.

- Breastmilk contains protective factors that help children fight against ear infections, lower respiratory infections, pneumonia and diarrhea.
- Breastfed babies are less likely to have chronic digestive diseases and food allergies for the first several years of life.

- Breastfeeding is associated with a decreased risk for maternal anemia, premenopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancers.

- Breastmilk helps your baby's brain development and may improve your baby's IQ.

- Breastfeeding provides an opportunity for mother and child to have special time together.

- Breastmilk is always readily available; there are no bottles to wash or formula to prepare.



Photo by Roni Chastain, RN, FACCE

"I am teaching my baby, Isabel, that love and comfort are not only associated with food." Pedro, father of 1-month-old Isabel.

- Breastfed babies smell fresher; spit-up and dirty diapers don't smell bad and breastmilk does not stain clothes.

- Breastfeeding avoids the paper, plastic, tin or energy used for preparing, packaging or transporting formula.

- Breastfeeding produces special hormones in the mother that help her feel relaxed and loving towards her child.

- It's free!

MOTHER'S INFORMATION



Family Health Hotline a program of
1.800.322.2588
711 (tty relay) • withinreachwa.org **WithinReach**



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