

BREASTFEEDING BENEFITS FOR MOTHERS



BENEFIT	WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS	REFERENCES
Breastfeeding promotes bonding between mother and baby	Breastfeeding stimulates the release of the hormone oxytocin in the mother's body. Oxytocin stimulates uterine contractions and milk ejection and promotes the development of maternal behaviour and bonding between mother and her baby.	Uvnas-Moberg K. Breastfeeding: physiological, endocrine and behavioral adaptations caused by oxytocin and local neurogenic activity in the nipple and mammary gland. <i>Acta Paediatrica</i> 5(5): 525-30, 1996
Breastfeeding decreases a mother's risk of breast cancer	This case-controlled study of 608 breast cancer cases, demonstrated that the longer the lifetime of breastfeeding the greater the risk reduction for breast cancer. This relationship existed for both pre- and postmenopausal women and confirms previous research establishing a link between breastfeeding and reduction of breast cancer risk.	Zheng T. et al. Lactation and breast cancer: a case-control study in Connecticut. <i>Br J Cancer</i> 84: 1472-76, 2001
Breastfeeding helps prevent post-partum hemorrhage	Nursing releases oxytocin, stimulating contractions which expel the placenta and help shrink the uterus back to pre-pregnancy size. These contractions also discourage excessive bleeding from the placental site. Women who choose not to breastfeed must be given synthetic oxytocin to insure against haemorrhaging.	Chua S. et al. Influence of breastfeeding and nipple stimulation on postpartum uterine activity. <i>Br J Obstet Gynaecol</i> 101: 804-805, 1994
Breastfeeding helps decrease insulin requirements in diabetic mothers	Reduction in insulin dose postpartum was significantly greater in insulin dependant diabetic breastfeeding mothers than those who were bottlefeeding.	Davies H.A. Insulin Requirements of Diabetic Women who Breast Feed. <i>BMJ</i> 298: 1357-8, 1989

BENEFIT

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

REFERENCES

Breastfeeding decreases a mother's risk of developing ovarian cancer

Women who do not breastfeed have a 1.6 times greater risk of developing ovarian cancer than women who breastfeed.

Gwinn M.L. Pregnancy, breastfeeding and oral contraceptives and the risk of epithelial ovarian cancer.
J Clin Epidemiol 43: 559-568, 1990

Rosenblatt K.A. et al. Lactation and the risk of epithelial ovarian cancer.
Int J Epidemiol. 22: 192-197, 1993

Breastfeeding decreases a mother's risk of developing endometrial cancer

Studies show that the longer a woman breastfeeds, the less likely she is to get endometrial cancer.

Rosenblatt K.A. et al. Prolonged lactation and endometrial cancer.
Int J Epidemiol 24: 499-503, 1995

Petterson B. et al. Menstruation span- a time limited risk factor for endometrial carcinoma.
Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 65: 247-55, 1986

Breastfeeding decreases chances of osteoporosis

Breastfeeding mothers and their children have a lower risk of developing osteoporosis. Women who do not breastfeed have a 4 times higher risk for osteoporosis than women who do breastfeed.

Blaauw R. et al. Risk factors for development of osteoporosis in a South African population.
SAMJ 84: 328-32, 1994

Kalwart et al. Bone mineral loss during lactation and recovery after weaning.
Obstet. Gynecol. 86: 26-32, 1995

Melton L.J. et al. Influence of breastfeeding and other reproductive factors on bone mass later in life. Osteoporos Int 22: 684-691, 1993

Breastfeeding is a natural contraceptive

When women breastfeed exclusively, there is a less than 2% chance of pregnancy, when menses has not returned and the baby is less than 6 months old.

Kennedy K.I. et al. Contraceptive efficacy of lactational amenorrhoea.
Lancet 339: 227-230, 1992

Gray R.H. et al. Risk of ovulation during lactation.
Lancet 335: 25-29, 1990

Labbock M. et al. Puerperium and breast-feeding.
Curr Opin Obstet Gynecol 4: 818-825, 1992

