Breastfeeding is best for you and your baby

Find out why.....

10 Great Reasons To Breastfeed

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Today, most mothers are choosing to breastfeed their babies. As more Alabama families understand just how much of a difference breastfeeding makes to the health of both the mother and her baby, more families are supporting mothers to breastfeed longer.

Here are 10 Great Reasons to Breastfeed your Baby:

1. **Breast milk is the best food to help baby grow and develop**
   - It is custom made by each mother for her own baby
   - It contains the perfect amount of nutrients
   - It contains valuable antibodies that help prevent disease/illness/allergies
   - Colostrum, “first milk”, helps prevent the growth of harmful bacteria by coating baby’s digestive system

2. **Brain Power**
   - There is strong evidence that children who are breastfed score higher on IQ tests

3. **Convenient and Portable**
   - Breast milk is always fresh and the exact right temperature
   - It is ready for baby at a moment’s notice
   - It makes night time feedings easier because there is no mixing, warming, or bottle washing

4. **Size Does Not Matter**
   - The size of breasts do not matter; most women are able to produce milk for their infant
   - Hormones begin to activate around 24 weeks to allow breast milk for baby
   - The more baby breastfeeds – the more hormones produced – the more milk mom produces

5. **Mothers Benefit Too**
   - Research shows breastfeeding provides a measure of protection against breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and weak/thin bones later in life
   - Breastfeeding burns calories which aid in weight loss after pregnancy
   - Exclusive breastfeeding may delay the return of menstruation

6. **Bonding**
   - The closeness and comfort of breastfeeding strengthens the bond with baby
   - Security, love, and support promote healthier and more satisfied infants

7. **Ongoing Benefits**
   - Research shows that breast milk is so important that it is the ONLY food or drink your baby needs for the first six months of life
   - Breastfeeding can continue even with the addition of age appropriate foods for baby after six months of age
   - Many women continue to breastfeed until their baby turns two – any amount of breast milk is good for baby

8. **Working Mothers**
   - Your baby can have all the benefits of breast milk even if you plan to return back to work or school
   - Mothers can express milk by hand or with a breast pump and give to the caregiver for feeding baby
   - Breast milk can be frozen for future use

9. **Good for the Environment**
   - Breast milk does not require any packaging, pollution, or waste

10. **Easy on the Budget**
    - Breastfeeding saves money

For more information about breastfeeding visit: [adph.org/perinatal](http://adph.org/perinatal)

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