

# Breastfeed!

**D**uring pregnancy, we do many things to give our babies a healthy start to life. Breastfeeding is the next step.

Breastfeeding gives your baby just what he or she needs for nutrition every day, and gives your baby a healthy start to childhood.

Breastfeeding is also good for the mother's health, and can save you money. Read on to learn more about how to successfully breastfeed: the natural way to feed your baby.

## Need Some Support?



Scan this QR Code with your smartphone to view local resources available to help you succeed at breastfeeding!

## Partners in Ohio Better Birth Outcomes

- Central Ohio Hospital Council
- Columbus Public Health
- Council on Healthy Mothers and Babies
- Heart of Ohio Family Health Centers
- Mount Carmel Health System
- Columbus Neighborhood Health Center
- Lower Lights Christian Health Center
- Nationwide Children's Hospital
- OhioHealth
- Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center



Through the Ohio Better Birth Outcomes initiative, local healthcare providers are working together to improve infant health in central Ohio. For more information on our work, visit [www.centralohiohospitals.org](http://www.centralohiohospitals.org)



The natural way to feed your baby.



## Breastfeeding keeps your baby healthy.

**W**ant a healthy baby? Breast milk contains antibodies and nutrients to boost your baby's immune system. Breastfed babies are more likely to have a healthier childhood, and the longer you breastfeed, the greater the benefit.

Studies show breastfed babies are less likely to develop health problems later in life. Breastfed babies have:

- Better breathing and lung function, and are less likely to develop asthma
- Healthier weights and are less likely to become obese
- Less chance of developing diabetes.

Breastfed babies have a lower risk of:

- Chronic ear infections, diarrhea and pneumonia
- Allergies
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Childhood leukemia.



## Breastfeeding also benefits the mother's health.

**L**ooking to feel great after pregnancy? Breastfeeding may help you to lose weight and protect your health.

Studies show breastfeeding moms:

- Return to healthy weight more quickly after pregnancy
- Have better mental health and coping skills. A chemical called oxytocin released during breastfeeding creates an intense bond between you and your baby. This helps reduce postpartum depression.
- Have a lower risk, later in life, for:
  - Breast or ovarian cancers
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Bone fractures

(Sources: U.S. Office of the Surgeon General; Womenshealth.gov)

## Breastfeeding can save you \$1,500 or more in the first year of baby's life.

**B**reastfeeding is a great way to save money now and in the future. You won't have to buy formula. Your breastfed baby will be healthier, needing fewer visits to the doctor and less medicine.

(Sources: U.S. Office of the Surgeon General; Mutual of Omaha.)



## Ask.

- Learn the benefits of breastfeeding.
- Ask questions of your doctor and other caregivers.
- Involve family members in learning about breastfeeding.
- Call your insurance company or your Medicaid provider to see if they can help you get a breast pump, if you need one.

## Connect.

- Get your baby skin-to-skin as soon as possible after birth. This increases his or her chances of successfully latching on.
- Keep your baby in your hospital room 24 hours a day ("rooming in") so you can feed him or her at the first signs of hunger.
- While in the hospital, ask to see a lactation consultant to learn how to breastfeed correctly and learn the signs of hunger.
- Frequent feedings are expected. In the first few days, your body will make colostrum, the first milk. It is made in small amounts, but it has what your baby needs.
- Bottles and pacifiers can confuse your baby and make it harder for your baby to take the breast.
- Reach out for help if you are having trouble breastfeeding, having difficulty latching on or feeling any discomfort. A list of local resources is available by scanning the QR code on this brochure.

## Share.

- Talk with family and friends about this important decision. Support at home will make breastfeeding easier for you.
- Talk with your employer about your decision to breastfeed, and together decide what space and time you need. Explain that you need to be able to express your breastmilk privately in a non-bathroom space during the workday.

Enjoy this special time with your baby. Breastfeeding is the natural way to feed your baby. Be proud of this step you are taking to make sure your baby is healthy – now and in the future!