



Breastfeeding Newsletter

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In the **first few days of your baby's life, your breasts make **colostrum**, a thick, yellowish fluid that is considered a **natural vaccination** for your baby. Science has proven that babies who are fed colostrums develop the **antibodies** to fight against many infectious diseases.**

Breastfeeding: MYTH vs. FACT

By: Leah Diffey, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Moms get a wide assortment of parenting advice. Sometimes it's difficult to sort through all of the information that is out there. Although most advice is well-meaning, it is sometimes not based on fact. There are many myths about breastfeeding. It is important for moms to make an educated decision when it comes to how they feed their baby. So let's explore the facts concerning some common breastfeeding myths.

Myth: Formula has more vitamins and nutrients than breast milk.

The opposite is true! Breast milk is full of more essential vitamins that are needed for a growing baby. Even more important are the antibodies that are passed from the mother to baby. These help keep the baby healthy and well, especially during Flu season.

Myth: You can't take medication while you are breastfeeding.

Many medications are compatible with breastfeeding. If you are unsure you can find recent research and specific information at www.infantrisk.com. Talk with your doctor or a lactation consultant to see if there are safe alternatives that are conducive with breastfeeding. If you must take medication that is unsafe, you may pump and discard the milk until the medication is out of your system. Then you may resume normal breastfeeding.

Myth: My breast size and nipple shape will not allow me to breastfeed.

Size and shape of breast has nothing to do with milk production. Breast size variation is due to fatty tissue rather than number of milk ducts. Nipple shape or size may pose a challenge for some babies as they learn to breastfeed, but there are tools and support that can help a mother be successful. Don't hesitate to talk to a lactation consultant or Breastfeeding Peer Counselor if you feel like the baby is having difficulty latching on.

Myth: If I breastfeed, the rest of the family won't be able to be involved.

Caring for a baby is much more than just feeding him. Dad and the extended family can diaper, cuddle, bathe, and play with the baby. Skin to skin time is beneficial with family members too. Also help with everyday chores like cooking, laundry and cleaning helps mom get rest so that she can be there to give the baby his essential nutrition. When mom is nursing, family can make sure she is comfortable with a drink and snack in reach.

Myth: Formula feeding is cheaper than breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding can actually save a family up to \$1,500 in a baby's first year alone. In addition, breastfed babies are healthier which means less money spent on doctor visits and medication. Even moms who receive help through WIC get better financial benefits if they breastfeed for a full year.

Myth: Babies get confused if they're given formula and breast milk. Parents must choose one or the other.

Breast milk is the best for babies, but sometimes they need to be supplemented when mom returns to work or school. Every ounce of breast milk counts! The baby will receive the benefits even if she gets a bottle of formula at the babysitter or daycare. Breast milk will help her digest the supplement better. If supplementation is necessary, make sure you pump or hand express so that your body will keep up with supply.

Myth: You can't breastfeed in public.

Missouri law states that a woman may breastfeed her baby anywhere they are allowed to be. Breastfed babies eat often and mothers need to respond to their baby's needs. Some may be bothered, but public opinion is changing. When you nurse in public you are helping to normalize breastfeeding. Mothers should be proud that they are providing their baby with the best nutrition, wherever that may be.

Myth: I can't breastfeed if I return to work.

You can still breastfeed you baby if you are separated from her during the day. You can pump while at work, on the weekends, or in the evenings. It is ideal to pump every 3 hours while separated and that milk will be fed to the baby through a bottle in the upcoming days. Some moms start pumping in the first weeks at home with the baby to build up a supply in the freezer. Talk to you Breastfeeding Peer Counselor so that you can work out a good plan. You may need to be creative, but it is possible to work and continue to breastfeed.

Myth: I won't have enough milk.

Moms almost always make enough milk to feed their babies. Your baby is likely getting more milk than you think at each feeding. A newborn's stomach is only the size of an almond. If you eat in a healthy way, drink water and nurse often, your milk supply should be plentiful. If you have any concerns about your milk supply or your child's weight, check-in with your Breastfeeding Peer Counselor or pediatrician.

****If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact Leah Diffey, BFPC at 573-470-0223. The Pike County Health Department is here to help you meet your breastfeeding goals!**

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