

What have you heard about **infant formula**?

Find out the facts!



Formula is not the same as breastmilk.

Breastmilk is a living, constantly changing food that provides everything your baby needs to grow and be healthy. The living parts of your milk cannot be man-made, and many are unique to you. Your milk contains hundreds of nutrients that scientists are only beginning to discover.

There is no added growth or health benefit to infant formula.

Breastmilk alone provides the optimal food for your baby for 6 months, and continues to be important for at least 2 years. Formula may contribute to childhood obesity. Avoid formula, and ask your healthcare provider about "donor human milk" if a supplement is recommended.

Formula feeding takes more time and preparation effort than breastfeeding.

Washing bottles, making exact water measurements, and safely storing formula are all required activities with formula feeding. Extra planning is necessary before leaving the house for an errand. Babies fed formula have more diarrhea, pneumonia, allergies, and ear infections. Those illnesses would take a lot of your time!

Bottles work very differently than breasts.

Infants use their tongue, jaw, and face muscles to get milk from your breasts. This helps their mouth and face grow and develop normally. Bottle nipples have a different shape and a faster flow. Babies are more likely to gag or overfeed when using a bottle. If you need to use a bottle, please learn about safe bottle feeding from a healthcare provider first.

Introducing formula will decrease your milk supply.

Breastfeeding early and often is what makes a good milk supply. Early formula feeding, even in small amounts, can decrease your milk supply, and your baby may get used to the fast flow from the bottle.

What have you heard about **breastfeeding**?

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Ready... Set...

B **A** **B** **Y**

Breastfeeding does not cause your breasts to sag.

All breasts lose their firmness with age and weight gain/loss.

Breastfeeding should not be painful.

There may be discomfort at first but it should be minimal and should go away in the first week. Pain that continues or is severe is not normal and you should get help from a lactation consultant.

There is no perfect nipple shape or size for breastfeeding.

Babies can latch onto many types of breast nipples. If you have concerns about your nipples, please contact your health care provider or a lactation consultant for an evaluation.

No breasts are too large or too small to breastfeed.

Size does not matter. Small breasts can produce a full milk supply, and babies can breastfeed fine on large breasts. If you have widely spaced or very unusual breasts, a history of breast surgery, or are concerned you don't have enough breast tissue, please contact your health care provider or a lactation consultant for an evaluation.

Night waking and night feeding are normal.

Newborns do not know the difference between night and day as adults do. They are growing rapidly, and need the frequent, easily digested feedings that your milk provides. Babies who are breastfed have a decreased chance of death from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

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Breastfeeding is a new skill, and it takes practice and support.

Breastfeeding is not easy for every mother and baby. Be patient with yourself as you both learn how to make it work. Get support from friends, family, and your healthcare team. Remember to take it day by day. It gets MUCH easier after the first days and weeks!

You can return to work or school and continue to feed your baby only your milk.

You can express your milk and store it for later use. Many women successfully use pumps or their hands to remove their milk for others to feed when they are away from their infants. It is still important to breastfeed when you are with your baby. You can talk to your supervisor about your plans ahead of time and get support from available resources.

Most women breastfeed.

At least 75% of all women in the United States breastfeed. Even among the groups less likely to breastfeed, about 60% or more start breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is now the norm in the United States.

You can breastfeed outside your home.

Women have different feelings about nursing in public. You will find what is most comfortable for you. Rest assured - you have the legal right to breastfeed in any public space.

You can breastfeed, even if you smoke or take medications.

Talk to your healthcare provider if you think your medications or habits prohibit you from breastfeeding. Many medications do not pass into breastmilk. Chemicals in cigarettes do pass through breastmilk, but breastfeeding is considered safer than formula feeding, even if you are a smoker.