



"Embrace" courtesy of Rie Muñoz/ Rie Muñoz Ltd.



**Bartlett.**  
Beginnings

presents

# Truths & Myths about Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is that very special gift only you can give your baby. While most believe that "breast is best," our knowledge about its benefits is expanding constantly. We offer this information to you.

A program of **Bartlett Regional Hospital**

# *Truths & Myths about Breastfeeding*

## ***Benefits for your Baby***

---

"Breastfeeding gives babies complete nutrition plus immunological benefits (the ability to fight or prevent infection) to launch them in a healthy life." C. Everett Koop, MD, former U.S. Surgeon General

Human milk contains all the nutrients a baby needs in exactly the right proportions. It is more easily digested and is gentler on baby's stomach (as well as intestines) than artificial infant milk or formula. It is also a natural food, not a foreign protein or artificial food.

### ***Additional benefits are:***

- Bonding, breastfeeding can bring you closer
- No chance for a mistake in mixing/contaminating the solution
- It is easier and more convenient, especially during the night to breastfeed a hungry baby
- Breast milk contains special nutrients, not found in artificial formulas, which aid in brain growth and nervous system development.

### ***Risks of Artificial/Formula Feeding:***

- Formula/Artificially fed infants generally have more respiratory and twice the number of ear infections than breastfed babies
- Formula/Artificially fed infants have more risk of pneumonia and meningitis than breastfed babies
- Artificially/formula fed babies are six times more likely to get or become seriously ill with gastroenteritis (vomiting and diarrhea)
- Formula/Artificially fed babies are more likely to die of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or "crib death") than breastfed babies
- Formula/Artificially fed babies typically need more doctor or hospital visits than breastfed infants
- Immunizations (shots) are less effective in formula/artificially fed babies
- Formula/Artificially fed infants are more likely to develop allergies and asthma than breastfed infants

### ***Formula/Artificially fed babies:***

- May be more likely to get diabetes in childhood
- May be more likely to get certain cancers of childhood, such as leukemia and lymphoma
- May be more likely to need glasses or orthodontia (braces on their teeth)

Simply put, breastfed babies are healthier, have higher IQs, and have life-long protection from some illnesses.

### *The benefits for you are many, as breastfeeding is:*

- MUCH more convenient than using artificial infant milk or formula — breast milk is always ready and at the right temperature, needs no preparation, and requires no shopping or the use of extra nipples and bottles.
- MUCH less expensive than artificial infant milk or formula, which can cost over \$100 per month
- LESS expensive overall because of fewer doctor or Emergency Room visits, and fewer medicines to buy, 10x less risk of hospitalization in babies first year alone.

### *As a matter of fact, breastfeeding:*

- Helps mothers lose weight (body fat) stored during pregnancy (especially on the hips and thighs)
- Makes mothers less likely to get ovarian cancer and breast cancer
- Helps mothers' uterus contract back into shape faster (you lose less blood)
- Helps parents miss fewer work days because of a sick child (breastfed babies are generally healthier)
- Increases mothering hormones (prolactin, oxytocin, etc.) and increases bonding
- Helps protect the environment as you will make less garbage from bottles, cans, packaging, etc.
- Allows parents to sit down and relax with your baby more often.

## *Now for the Myths*

---

### *“Breastfeeding will make my breasts sag”*

**FALSE:** Pregnancy, age and gravity make breasts sag!

### *“Breastfeeding is painful”*

**FALSE.** Ask your nurse for help in the hospital. Breastfeeding is usually easy. While many mothers experience some nipple tenderness in the first two weeks, it is not normal for breastfeeding to be painful. After all, women have been doing this since the beginning of humanity. If unusual problems do develop, Bartlett Beginnings has board-certified Lactation Consultants and hospital staff includes several knowledgeable obstetrical nurses to assist in these circumstances. If problems occur after you are home with your baby, we are still here to help. We have outpatient appointments three days a week to help with any feeding problems.

***“I can only eat certain foods.”***

**FALSE.** Breastfeeding does not require a special diet. Most women can eat whatever they want. Food that is eaten will slightly alter the taste of your milk, which will prepare your baby for the family diet when it is time to introduce solids.

***“I will be completely tied down.”***

**MOSTLY FALSE.** Parenting, not breastfeeding, demands your time and attention and is a lifetime commitment. Breastfeeding is temporary, and most women find that it is much more convenient than dealing with bottles, especially outside the home. By expressing or pumping your milk, someone else can feed the baby while you are away. (We recommend waiting three to four weeks after birth before introducing a bottle.) Most mothers find breastfed babies very portable.

***“The baby’s father can’t do it.”***

**TRUE, HOWEVER** there are many more aspects to infant care and parenting than breastfeeding. The father can assist and do all those other things the baby will love while enjoying his cuddling and voice, too. Also, you can express milk for him to feed the baby. (Again, we don’t recommend introducing a bottle for three to four weeks after birth.)

***“Breastfeeding is hard to do in public.”***

**FALSE:** While some mothers find this hard, most mothers learn to put a blanket or jacket over the baby and can nurse very discreetly. Practise in front of a mirror, or someone you trust before going out. You will likely learn you can be discreet and a quiet nursing baby attracts much less attention than a crying baby.

Finally, if you are still undecided, you can always switch to artificial milk/formula feeding later, but you **CANNOT** change your mind and breastfeed later.

**REMEMBER:** however long you breastfeed, both you and your baby benefit. So try it — you might love it!

***For inquiries, or more information, please call: 796-8424***



provided by

**Bartlett.**  
**Beginnings**