

## BREASTFEEDING FACTS

### DID YOU KNOW . . . . .

- ∞ Bronchitis, pneumonia and bronchiolitis are four times greater among formula fed babies than breastfed infants.
- ∞ Otitis media (*ear infections*) are three times more likely to develop in formula fed infants or those breastfed for less than three months.
- ∞ Formula feeding creates a four times greater risk for hemophilus influenza among North American infants. The protection against hemophilus influenza is greatest during the first six months of life.
- ∞ Breastmilk contains a powerful chemical that prevents diarrhea in infants.
- ∞ Intestinal disorders, such as Crohns disease, are greater during adulthood for those people who are formula fed.
- ∞ One in five hundred children in Canada have Diabetes Mellitus. Research has shown that exclusive breastfeeding (*no formula*) reduces the risk of insulin dependent diabetes.
- ∞ Childhood cancers are six times greater in children who were formula fed or breastfed for less than six months.
- ∞ Infants breastfed beyond five months have increased visual acuity.

**Source:** The Canadian Journal of Continuing Medical Education: "Breastfeeding Benefits and Barriers", Kuzyk, C.J., Woolgar, J.J., September 1995, pp. 99-107.

*Produced by the Mother-to-Mother Breastfeeding Support Network. For more information contact the Peterborough Family Resource Centre (705) 748-9144*

### THERE ARE ALSO BENEFITS FOR MOTHERS . . .

#### **Mothers who breastfeed have:**

- ∞ less postpartum bleeding
- ∞ earlier return to their pre-pregnant weight
- ∞ increased child-spacing
- ∞ improved bone remineralization with reduction in hip fractures in the post-menopausal period
- ∞ reduced risk of ovarian cancer and pre-menopausal breast cancer.

**Source:** Pediatrics Vol. 100, No. 6, December 1997, p. 1035.

## THE NUTRITIONAL AND OTHER BENEFITS OF BREASTMILK

- ☞ Always sterile and ready to serve, at the right temperature.
- ☞ Portable and free.
- ☞ Easily digested. Breastmilk produces smaller, softer curds than formula.
- ☞ Laxative effect clears bowels quickly.
- ☞ Prevents newborn jaundice by clearing bilirubin from baby's body.
- ☞ Promotes good facial structure.
- ☞ Encourages interaction with mother, enhances bonding, and provides extra stimulation to increase mental development.
- ☞ Contains special factors that promote metabolism in the baby.

### **Main Nutritional Advantages:**

- ☞ Biochemical blend that has been perfected over thousands of years to ensure optimal growth, development and survival.
- ☞ Ideal balance of vitamins and minerals that are easily absorbed by baby's body.
- ☞ Protein content is lower than in formula, therefore, makes less work for baby's kidneys.
- ☞ The type of fat in breastmilk promotes optimal brain and nervous system development.
- ☞ Contains a component that increases iron absorption in the baby.
- ☞ Contains human milk fat that is more digestible than formula fat.

- ☞ Breastmilk contains cholesterol (*formula does not*), therefore, the body learns to metabolize cholesterol early in life, preventing health problems in adulthood.
- ☞ Breastmilk changes during the feeding so that baby knows when he/she is getting close to the end of a feeding. This prevents the baby from eating too much.
- ☞ All necessary minerals are present in the breastmilk, and calcium and zinc are absorbed more easily.
- ☞ Iron absorption is best from breastmilk and is all the iron the baby requires for at least the first six months of life.
- ☞ Contains more vitamin C than formula, and all other vitamins are present.

### **Main Anti-infective Benefits of Breastmilk:**

- ☞ Breastmilk contain substances that protect the infant's stomach and bowel from harmful bacteria. Your child will be less likely to develop Crohns disease and celiac disease.
- ☞ Breastmilk contains many factors and substances that protect baby against bacterial infections, viruses and parasites. The immunological properties of breastmilk help newborns resist things such as diarrhea, gastric and respiratory illnesses.
- ☞ Breastmilk reduces the incidence of allergies later in life.

Source: Health News: "Breast is still best", University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, April 1989, pp. 8-12.