

## A SPECIAL TIME FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

Nature has given every woman a wonderful way to care for her new baby.

You can give your baby something that no one else can: a continuing connection with your body and the nurturing that goes along with giving your baby the only perfect food.

To find out more about support for parents, call your local public health office or community health centre.



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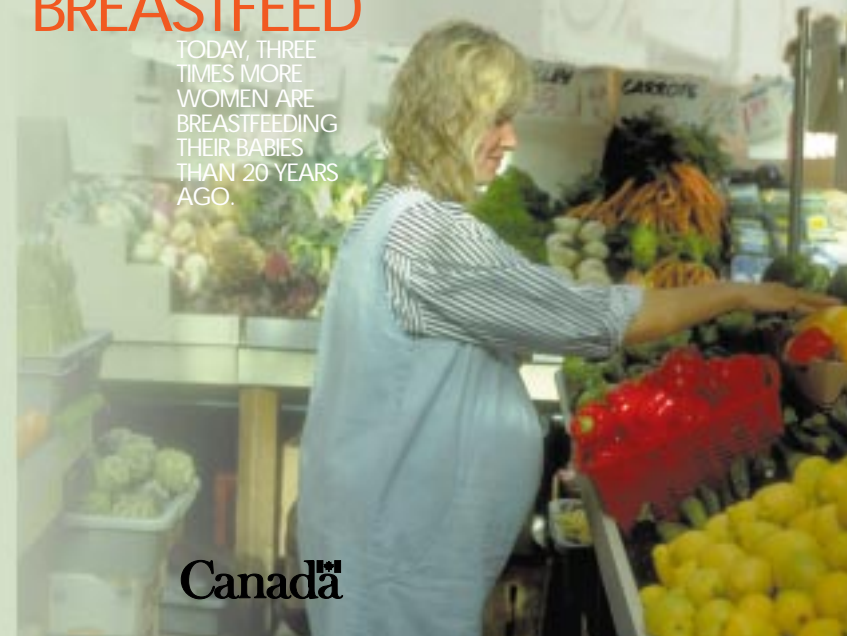
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# 10 GREAT REASONS TO BREASTFEED

TODAY, THREE  
TIMES MORE  
WOMEN ARE  
BREASTFEEDING  
THEIR BABIES  
THAN 20 YEARS  
AGO.



*Breastfeeding Friendly*



ANYTIME. ANYWHERE.

Canada

Twenty years ago, only one woman in four made the choice to breastfeed her baby. Approximately four out of five new mothers make that choice now.

Today, most parents know that mother's milk is not only the best food for their new baby – it can be the only food for the first four to six months of the baby's life.

Parents can be confused by conflicting advice about breastfeeding from well-meaning friends, and feel unprepared for what lies ahead. They become concerned about “not doing it right.” These concerns may rob them of the satisfaction of doing what is best for them and for their baby.

Breastfeeding is one of the best starts a mother can give her baby.

**1 TAILOR MADE** Only your milk is specifically made for your baby. Your body will automatically monitor it so that it is not too rich or too watery. It will have just the right protein, fat, vitamins and minerals, and as your baby grows, it will change to meet her changing needs. It is the easiest milk of all for your baby to digest.

And look at the results you can expect. Your breastfed baby may tend to burp less, will not get constipated and will have very soft, small, frequent stools that are non-odorous.

**2 NUTRIENTS PLUS** The first milk your breast will produce is *colostrum*. It is a rich yellowish fluid which contains water, sugar, protein and vitamins that your baby needs. It also provides your child with some protection against infection and allergies. Babies can still develop allergies, but chances are greatly reduced and an allergy may be less severe.

**3 CONVENIENT AND SAFE** Breast milk is always safe, fresh and exactly the right temperature. It's ready for a baby at a moment's notice, and you don't have to stop and boil water, sterilize bottles or heat formula. That makes night feedings a lot easier to handle! It also makes it easier to take baby visiting. Breast milk is always with you, so travelling with your baby is simpler.

**4 AUTOMATIC** Your baby should start to nurse as soon as possible after birth. If you can, have your baby room-in with you so she\* can nurse frequently. It may take two to six days for the breast milk to appear. The sucking signals your body to produce milk, and the more often you nurse your baby, the more milk you will produce.

Feed your new baby whenever she is hungry. Breast milk is digested in about 1 1/2 hours, so baby will probably want to feed every two to three hours. The size of your breasts doesn't matter. Big or small, they will produce all the milk your baby needs.

**5 CONTINUES THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP** You can begin to nurse as soon as your baby is born. You will be establishing a close physical contact with your baby that will help build a secure, loving relationship. You can't spoil a new baby, so give her all the cuddling she wants. Don't leave other family members out. Babies need hours of attention other than feeding and everybody can share in the many other aspects of caring for baby.

**6 AVAILABLE FOR MONTHS** Your baby may not need anything but your milk for four to six months. That means no water or other food or drink. If you nurse her as often as she wants, your baby will get everything she needs to grow. If baby wants very frequent feedings, it's generally no reflection on your milk supply. It's just baby setting her own pattern. So have confidence in yourself and in nature. Your body will produce all the nutrients your baby needs. At some point your baby may begin to wean herself when she starts eating other foods.

**7 EASY ON THE BUDGET** No formula or bottles. No artificial nipples. And breast milk costs a lot less. It is made from what you eat, so your only extra expense will be the few extra calories you must consume to produce the milk. However, even when you take into account the extra food you are eating to give your body more nutrients, breastfeeding still costs far less than formula.

**8 HELPS YOU LOSE WEIGHT** Breastfeeding can help you lose weight because it uses up the extra fat stored in your body during pregnancy. You should eat an extra 500 calories a day to produce the milk. But the good news is that your body uses 940 calories to produce one litre of milk. So breastfeeding will usually produce a slow, steady weight loss of one kilogram (two to three pounds) a month.

**9 AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE** Learning to breastfeed takes a little time and some patience but it's worth it. Many women have some difficulties, especially in the early weeks, but this is perfectly normal. Don't hesitate to talk about it to a public health nurse, your doctor or midwife, a friend who has breastfed or the La Leche League. Don't let a small concern become a big one.

**10 WORKS FOR WORKING MOTHERS** Don't feel that you have to lose this unique experience as soon as you return to work/school. Your baby can have all the benefits of your milk even after you've gone back to work/school.

It's best if you can be home for at least six weeks. It takes about that long for your milk supply to become well-established, so during that period avoid bottles and formula.

But when your milk is fully established, you have many more options.

As your baby gets older, you can express the milk by hand or with a breast pump and leave it with your caregiver to feed the baby later on. It can be frozen for future use.

Some mothers have day-care facilities at their place of work/school or nearby, so they can breastfeed during their breaks.

Don't miss out just because you're a working mom or a student.

\* The use of “she/her” also includes “him/he.”