

MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by the Nutaqqavut Health Information System (NHIS) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)

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WHAT MOTHERS IN NUNAVUT HAVE TO SAY...

- a) **Main reasons for breastfeeding** (cited by mothers): “Benefits for baby” (main reason), “emotional bonding between mom and baby”, “support from baby’s father” and “cost effective”.
- b) **Main reasons for not breastfeeding:** Adoption, embarrassment, inconvenience of breastfeeding, thought that formula was as good as breast milk.
- c) **Main reasons for discontinuing breastfeeding earlier (in order):** Perception of insufficient milk supply, lack of community/family support, smoking during breastfeeding, physical discomfort (eg. pain, sore), return to school.

SUPPORT MOTHERS AND PARENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Here are some ideas of how you can support mothers and parents in your community to initiate and continue breastfeeding:

- ♥ Ensure you and other staff is knowledgeable and supportive of breastfeeding. *CPNP supports breastfeeding education. Please contact cpnp@gov.nu.ca for more information.
- ♥ Ensure that your health facility accepts no free or subsidized supplies of breast milk substitutes, bottles, teats or pacifiers from manufacturers or distributors of these products.
- ♥ During pregnancy, discuss the **importance** of breastfeeding and instruct mothers on **how** to breastfeed.
- ♥ Encourage mother and her baby to have **skin-to-skin contact**.

- ♥ Instruct mother to breastfeed **whenever her baby wants to suckle** or if her breasts feel full, and to wake her baby if she/he sleeps too long.
- ♥ Show the mother how to keep up her milk supply and express her milk, should she and her baby be separated.
- ♥ Explain that artificial teats (rubber or silicon nipples of any type), dummies (pacifiers or soothers) or nipple shields can interfere with suckling. They should be avoided until breastfeeding is well established.
- ♥ Ensure the mother has support. Refer parents to peer support groups such as CPNP.
- ♥ Encourage and help the mother to breastfeed without the use of any other foods or liquids for the baby. (*Exclusively breastfeed for the first six months; no other foods or drinks*).



