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





BREASTFEEDING



WHY IS BREASTFEEDING IMPORTANT FOR MOTHERS **AND BABIES?**

- Breastfeeding is best for babies. Breast milk is the best food to help babies grow and develop. It contains the perfect amount of nutrients and changes as baby grows to keep up with his/her needs. Breast milk also contains antibodies that help prevent disease and may reduce the risk of allergies.
- Breastfeeding is best for mothers. It helps them to gradually lose the weight gained during pregnancy. It also protects them against breast cancer, ovarian cancer and osteoporosis (weak bones) later in life.
- Breastfeeding is best for the entire community. Breastfeeding is essential to strengthen the bond between parents and their baby, and contributes to building a secure, loving relationship. Breastfeeding is convenient and free. "When you breastfeed, you don't have to buy anything." Elders Saulu Nakashuk (Pangnirtung) and Uingut Deporah (Igloolik)

WHY IS BREASTFEEDING **IMPORTANT IN NU?**

- Reliable Nunavut-specific data on breastfeeding rates is limited; however the data that is available indicates that Nunavut's rates are lower than expected given the strong culture of breastfeeding.
- The majority of women in Nunavut (84 percent in one study) initiate breastfeeding, however only about one out of five breastfeeds exclusively for six months as recommended by Health Canada and the World Health Organization.

- Breastfeeding protects babies against infections (gastrointestinal, ear, upper and lower respiratory tract). Infants in Nunavut are eight times more at risk of infection in comparison to infants in non Inuit-residingareas.
- Breastfeeding can decrease the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) by as much as 36 percent. SIDS is a major cause of death amongst infants in Nunavut between the age of one month and one year. Nunavut infants unfortunately have a four fold increased risk of dying due to SIDS.

GOOD NEWS / SUCCESS STORY

- Communities across Nunavut celebrate breastfeeding during National Breastfeeding Week (October 1-7). Since 2003, Nunavut has been participating in the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge organized during that week. In 2011, Nunavut had the highest participation in the "less than 10,000 births per year" category and won first place for a 3rd year in a row! Visit www.babyfriendly.ca/Challenge to see the results.
- In Nunavut, those mothers who do breastfeed do so for a long duration. Average breastfeeding duration was 20.7 months in the Anaana survey.

2011 CATEGORY C LESS THAN 10,000 BIRTHS / YEAR

States and Provinces

- 1) Nunavut, Canada
- 2) Northwest Territories, Canada
- 3) Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada
- 4) New Brunswick, Canada
- 5) Yukon, Canada
- 6) Nova Scotia, Canada
- 7) Prince Edward Island, Canada









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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".
- 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).











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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CHRs and Community Health Workers:

FREE Online Breastfeeding Training for Everyone: www.beststart.org/courses

This course is an entry-level course designed for staff and volunteers of community agencies that work with prenatal women. The course will take 1-1.5 hours to complete.

Useful Websites for Everyone:

www.caringforkids.cps.ca/

Information for parents from Canada's pediatricians.

www.lllc.ca

La Leche League (LLL) Canada encourages, promotes and provides mother-to-mother breastfeeding support and education.

Health Care Professionals

Help collect relevant information through the NHIS records.

Up to now, there is no source where reliable longitudinal information on Nunavut specific breastfeeding rates can be found. To help address this gap, please make sure you correctly complete prenatal and well-baby records, including the following sections:

Well Baby Record: 2 month, 6 month, 12 month:

Do you <u>currently</u> breastfeed? (only check one)
■ Never Breastfeed
No, discontinued at: months
Yes, Breast milk only
> Since: 🔲 Birth 🔲 7 days ago 🔲 other:
Yes, Breast milk & other foods (including water)
> In the past 7 days, how many feeds of
other liquids/food per day?
□ 1-2 □ >3
Good Latch Nutritive Suck

Well Baby Record: 2-3 years, 4-5 years:

Do you <u>currently</u> breastfeed? (only check one)
 Never Breastfed No, discontinued at: months Breast milk in the past 7 days

Prenatal Record - Part 3 A

INITIAL VISIT / 1 st TRIMESTER () Weeks
20a. Food Security & CPNP
Do you plan to breastfeed?
☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ MAYBE

3rd TRIMESTER (~36) Weeks

20c. Food Security & CPNP

Do you plan to breastfeed?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ MAYBE







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Refer to the Nunavut Prenatal Record and Well Child Record Guidelines for additional information on how to complete these sections.

With this information we will be better able to:

- Evaluate the impact of breastfeeding programs and policies on child health and growth;
- Ensure effective and efficient health services for moms and babies.

FREE Online Breastfeeding Training

www.breastfeedingtraining.org

Detailed information regarding the theory and practice of lactation management. Course materials are presented as a series of modules, each taking approximately 30 minutes to complete.

www.breastfeedingbasics.org

Academic, non-commercial, short course on the fundamentals of breastfeeding. It is geared primarily for the medical practitioner, although anyone is welcome to browse or take the course.

www.breastfeedingclinic.com/bfdvd

A free short on-line course with videos and case studies. Pre-requisite for the course is www.breastfeedingbasics.org.

Useful Websites for Health Professionals

http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/BFI

The Baby-Friendly Initiative provides guidelines to facilitate informed decision making about infant feeding. It describes what constitutes appropriate care for women and families who decide to breastfeed, as well as for those who decide not to breastfeed. These guidelines are based upon evidence based best practice standards.

www.bfmed.org

Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine

www.motherisk.org

Drugs that are contraindicated or should be used with caution by lactating women are described here.

WHAT IS THE NHIS

Nutaggavut 'Our Children' Health Information System (NHIS) allows us to identify and address maternal/child health issues in Nunavut. The NHIS will collect data from conception to 5 years of age including such things as health status, exposures, food security, and nutrition. It will allow enhanced evaluation of programs and projects that attempt to address maternal/child health concerns. It will identify healthy practices that can be better encouraged and identify areas in need of support and resources. Ultimately it will assist in using effectively the limited human and other resources for the promotion of maternal/child health.

For more information contact: NHIS@gov.nu.ca

CANADA PRENATAL NUTRITION PROGRAM (CPNP)

- CPNP helps pregnant women and new parents make healthy choices for their babies.
- For more information, contact your local CPNP program or cpnp@gov.nu.ca



