

Why Breastfeed?

Babies were born to be breastfed

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When you choose to breastfeed, you make an investment in your baby's future. Breastfeeding allows you to make the food that is perfect for your baby. Your milk gives your baby the healthy start that will last a lifetime.

WHO recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. At six months, solid foods, such as mashed fruits and vegetables, should be introduced to complement breastfeeding for up to two years or more. In addition:

breastfeeding should begin within one hour of birth

breastfeeding should be "on demand", as often as the child wants day and night; and bottles or pacifiers should be avoided.

These are just some of the benefits of breastfeeding;

1. A Healthy Baby

Breastfeeding is best for your baby because:

Recent studies show that babies who are exclusively breastfed for 6 months are less likely to develop ear infections, diarrhea, and respiratory illnesses. They may also be less likely to develop childhood obesity.

Breast milk has just the right amount of fat, sugar, water, and protein that is needed for a baby's growth.

Most babies find breast milk easier to digest than formula. Infants can easily digest human milk more easily than the milk of other animals, this may be because human milk contains an enzyme that aids digestion. Most babies are not allergic to the protein in breast milk because it is a baby's natural food. Premature babies are healthier when they are breastfed.

2. Bonding Between Mother And Baby

During breastfeeding there is skin to skin contact which helps many nursing mothers bond with their babies. This skin-to-skin contact can enhance the emotional connection between a mother and her baby.

3. Satisfies A Baby's Emotional Needs

Babies need to be held. It is comforting for infants to be held close and cuddled while they are being breastfeeding. Breastfeeding your baby helps him or her develop emotional stability.

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4. Nutrients And Protection

Naturally, breast milk contains many of the vitamins and minerals that a newborn requires except Vitamin D, so all breastfed babies should begin receiving vitamin D supplements during the first 2 months and continuing until the baby is a year old.

5. Breastfeeding Is Superior To Formula

Infant formula does not contain the antibodies found in breast milk. The long-term benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and children cannot be replicated with infant formula. When infant formula is not properly prepared, there are risks arising from the use of unsafe water and unsterilized equipment or the potential presence of bacteria in powdered formula. Malnutrition can result from over-diluting formula to "stretch" supplies. While frequent feeding maintains breast milk supply, if formula is used but becomes unavailable, a return to breastfeeding may not be an option due to diminished breast milk production.

6. Helps Pass Meconium

When babies are born, they are born with a sticky tar-like substance called meconium in their intestines. The first milk or colostrum helps move this substance through the infant's body.

7. Beneficial For Mom

Helps mom lose baby weight after birth, it helps the uterus to get back to its original size more quickly and lessens any bleeding you may have after giving birth, and if you are breastfeeding your baby exclusively it serves as a natural contraceptive as it delays the return of the menstrual cycle. Breastfeeding reduces risks of breast and ovarian cancer, type II diabetes, and postpartum depression.

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8. Beneficial For Dad

Breastfeeding is best for fathers because:

It saves time and it's free — it can save the family budget hundreds of naira. You can enjoy the beauty of breastfeeding by simply sitting with mom and baby to enjoy the special mood that breastfeeding creates. You can still help to care for your baby by giving him or her a bottle of pumped breast milk.

9. Beneficial For society

Breastfeeding is best for society because: it saves on healthcare costs, it adds to a more productive workforce since breastfeeding moms often need less time off to care for sick babies and it creates a healthier society.

10. Sharper Brains

Beyond the immediate benefits for children, breastfeeding contributes to a lifetime of good health. Adolescents and adults who were breastfed as babies are less likely to be overweight or obese. They are less likely to have type-II diabetes and perform better in intelligence tests.

11. Its economical

Breastfeeding is free. It costs zero... naira... absolutely nothing beyond making sure you eat healthy food. So whether you're rich, comfortable, managing or poor, you can give your baby the very best nutrition available in the world. Isn't that great?!

Why is breastfeeding important for Nigerian women



Nursing mothers and most health care providers in Nigeria agree that the benefits of breastfeeding are endless. Sadly, millions of Nigerian parents don't take advantage of this form of infant nutrition. The breastfeeding rates of Nigerian women are much lower than those of several African countries. In fact, only 17% of Nigerian women breastfeed by the time their babies are 6 months old versus 52% in neighbouring country, Ghana.

According to the United Nations that over 5 million newborns in Nigeria are deprived of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of their lives, thereby missing out on necessary nutrients to give them a head start on life. Nigeria's lack of progress in exclusive breastfeeding denies millions of newborns in Nigeria the benefits of breast milk. and that breastfeeding drastically reduces deaths from acute respiratory infection and diarrhea; two major child killer diseases.