



## **BREASTFEEDING INFORMATION**

In today's busy life style, it can be hard to imagine how you can include the challenging yet rewarding task of breastfeeding. For some, it will come easily, and others it may be more challenging. If you decide not to breast feed, giving your baby formula will provide adequate nutrients to help your baby grow. Many moms do both breastfeeding and bottle feeding. Here are some reasons to choose breastfeeding first.

### **Breastfeeding Benefits for Baby:**

- Easier for baby to digest with less gas
- Perfect mix of vitamins, fats and proteins for baby's growth
- Contains antibodies to boost baby's immune system, which will reduce the risk of asthma, allergies, ear infections, respiratory illnesses and diarrhea
- Allows for physical closeness (skin-to-skin contact) and eye contact, both help baby bond with you and feel more safe and secure

### **Breastfeeding Benefits for Mom:**

- Releases the hormone oxytocin, which stimulates the muscles of the uterus to return to normal size and position, more quickly
- Burns extra calories to help you lose pregnancy weight
- Decreases the risk of breast and ovarian cancers
- Saves money on cost of formula and bottle supplies
- Provides special bonding time with baby

### **Common Challenges and Remedies with Breastfeeding:**

- **Sore nipples**
  - Breastfeeding should not be painful. The nipples may be tender at first, but with proper latching and good positioning, nursing should be comfortable. When you sit down to breastfeed, get into a comfortable position and bring baby to the breast, instead of you leaning over to reach the breast to baby. The whole nipple, including the areola, should be in the baby's mouth when feeding. If sore nipples develop, you can try:
    - repositioning to obtain a better latch
    - pumping to relieve some discomfort until the nipples are healed
    - applying lanolin or over the counter creams
    - using breast shields or hydro gel pads may be helpful
- ❖ If no relief, please call the office to assess the need for a prescription or an office visit.

- **Clogged milk ducts**
  - When tender sore lumps develop in the breasts while breastfeeding, it is likely a clogged duct which can be relieved by the following remedies
    - warm compresses
    - massage from the outside of the breast toward the nipple in a circular motion
    - breastfeed more often on the affected side
    - pump to get extra suction to help loosen the clog
    - hydration is important, so be sure to keep well hydrated
    - breastfeed in a relaxed, comfortable position
    - wear a supportive, comfortable bra that is not too tight
  
- **Decreased Milk Supply**
  - As long as your baby is having adequate weight gain as determined by your pediatrician, it is normal for your milk supply to adjust as the baby grows. He/she may only breastfeed for 5 minutes, but is getting what he/she needs. Growth spurts can also happen, so they may need additional breastfeeding time at some point to build up your milk supply. These growth spurts usually occur around 3 weeks, 6 weeks and 3 months. If your supply is low, you can try the following:
    - breastfeed often
    - make sure baby is positioned well with a good latch, remembering to bring baby to the breast, instead of you leaning over
    - offer both breasts at each feeding
    - feed an additional 5-10 minutes longer than usual
    - keep well hydrated
    - pump in between breastfeeding sessions
  
- ❖ If these suggestions do not work, please contact the office to assess the need for medication or an office visit.
  
- **Oversupply of Milk**
  - On occasion you may feel engorged or overly full of breast milk. This can be very uncomfortable for mom and baby. Here are some remedies:
    - breastfeed on one side each feeding
    - gradually increase the amount of time per feeding
    - feed baby before he/she gets overly hungry to prevent aggressive suckling
    - hand express the milk to relieve the pressure if the breast is overly full before feeding
    - use cold compresses to reduce swelling and discomfort
  
- **Mastitis**
  - Mastitis is a breast infection that needs to be treated with antibiotics, as well as other over-the-counter remedies to help with the symptoms. Many times this is caused by clogged milk ducts. It is important to clear the clogged milk duct before it turns into an infection.
  - Typical symptoms usually occur in one breast:
    - breast soreness
    - redness/red streaks on breast
    - warm breast
    - Other symptoms include flu-like symptoms:
      - fever

- fatigue
- body aches
- nausea

- **Fungal Infections**

- A fungal infection or yeast infection, as they are more commonly called, can be very itchy and uncomfortable on the breast. Yeast/candida is normal in our body, but can overgrow and cause the following symptoms in breastfeeding women.
  - sore nipples
  - shooting pains while breastfeeding
  - itchy/flaky nipples
  - blistered nipples
- ❖ If any of these symptoms have occurred, and you have tried the remedies for sore nipples, please contact our office for a prescription or office visit.
  - Yeast overgrowth is usually caused by:
    - an overly moist environment on your skin
    - nipples that are sore or cracked
    - if you were on antibiotics or steroids
    - if you have a chronic illness like diabetes
    - thrush in your baby's mouth – please contact your pediatrician
  - Prevention for yeast overgrowth
    - Change your bra and breast pads often
    - Wash any wash cloths/towels you use with very hot water
    - Wash your hands often with soap and warm water
    - Boil pacifiers, teething toys and bottles
- ❖ For other breastfeeding concerns, please contact our office or one of the resources below
  - AAMC lactation warm line 443 481-6977 or [www.aahs.org/birth/lactation.php](http://www.aahs.org/birth/lactation.php)
  - La Leche League International, [www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org)
  - [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov)
  - American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
  - [www.breastfeedingbasics.org](http://www.breastfeedingbasics.org)