



Breastfeeding for Healthier Babies

By Janet D. Lawson, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.

Our grandmothers had a saying: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One of the most heartbreaking situations for a medical provider is to treat a sick child whose condition could have been prevented or made less severe. We can’t always protect our children from disease, but there is one thing we can do to strengthen their immune systems. What is this “ounce of prevention”? Mother’s milk.

Mother’s milk is free, but don’t let the low price fool you. Mother’s milk is a valuable commodity. This dynamic substance changes to meet a baby’s needs as the child grows and develops. The milk a mother produces for her newborn is different from the milk she produces for her 3-month old, 6-month old or toddler. If her baby is born early, her milk will be perfect to meet her premature baby’s special nutrition needs.

As a physician and a mother, I want to see mothers and babies thrive. Our population has high incidences of breast cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis, diseases which breastfeeding may help to reduce. Although more research is needed, studies indicate breastfeeding has a significant impact on the incidence of many health conditions.

If you are pregnant or planning to start a family, you owe it to your children to learn everything you can about the benefits of breastfeeding. Call the State WIC office at 1-800-942-3678 for breastfeeding information. If you are a new mom and need immediate help or assistance with breastfeeding, call the Texas breastfeeding helpline at 1-800-514-6667.

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