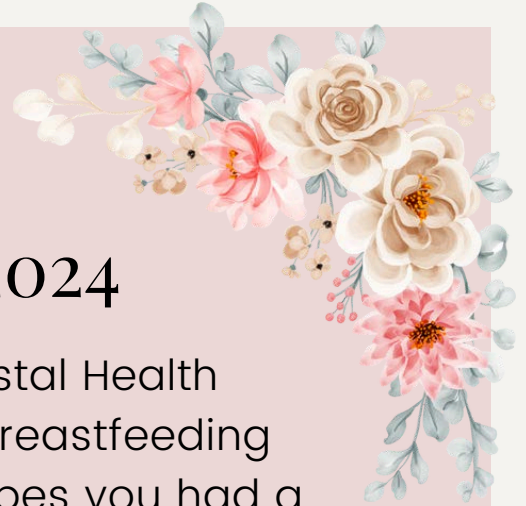


Staying A Breast



May 2024

The Coastal Health District breastfeeding team hopes you had a Happy Mother's Day!

Breastfeeding Support

The Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) supports the first 1,000 days of breastfeeding, which includes the period of time from conception through a child's second birthday. This is a critical window of opportunity for ensuring optimal health, growth and cognitive development for your baby. WIC offers nutritious foods that are essential for the health and development of pregnant women, infants, and young children.

WIC provides extensive support for breastfeeding mothers, including but not limited to access to lactation consultants, peer counseling, and breastfeeding classes. These invaluable resources have all been proven to support women with the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding.





Here's how breastfeeding contributes significantly to the first 1,000 days:



Nutritional Superiority: Breast milk is nature's perfect food for infants. It contains essential nutrients, antibodies, and enzymes tailored to meet the evolving needs of the growing child. From colostrum, the first milk rich in antibodies, to mature milk providing optimal nutrition, breastfeeding ensures that infants receive the ideal balance of nutrients crucial for their development.



Immune Support: The antibodies present in breast milk bolster the infant's immune system, providing protection against infections and diseases during a period when their own immune system is still developing. This immune support is particularly vital in the first few months of life, when infants are most vulnerable to illnesses.



Brain Development: Breast milk is not just nourishment for the body; it's also fuel for the brain. It contains essential fatty acids like DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) crucial for cognitive development and long-term brain health. Studies have shown that breast-fed infants may have a cognitive advantage over formula-fed counterparts, with potentially higher IQ scores and better academic achievement in later years.





Emotional Bonding: Breastfeeding fosters a unique bond between mother and child, promoting emotional security and attachment. The close physical contact during breastfeeding stimulates the release of oxytocin, often referred to as the "love hormone," which enhances maternal-infant bonding and contributes to the child's emotional well-being.



Long-term Health Benefits: The benefits of breastfeeding extend beyond infancy, impacting the child's health well into adulthood. Breastfed infants are less likely to develop chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases later in life. The protective effects of breastfeeding during the first 1,000 days lay the groundwork for a healthier future.



Environmental Sustainability: Breastfeeding is not only beneficial for the child but also for the environment. It's a renewable and environmentally friendly source of nutrition, requiring no packaging, processing or transportation compared to formula feeding. By choosing breastfeeding, mothers contribute to sustainability efforts by reducing carbon footprints associated with infant feeding.



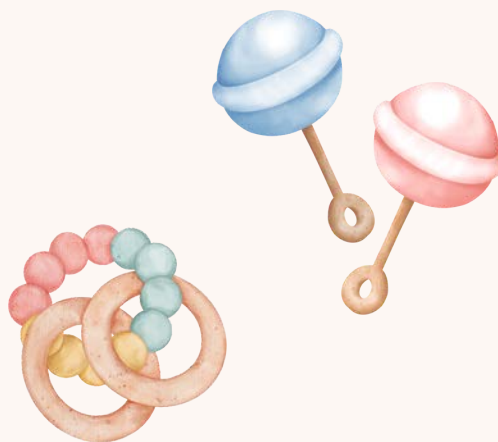


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<https://thousanddays.org/why-1000-days>



Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma
- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Ear and respiratory infections
- Sudden infant death syndrome



Connect with us!

To connect with a breastfeeding peer counselor, call us at
912-385-0330!



CoastalHealthDistrict.org/breastfeeding

