

101 Reasons to Breastfeed Your Child

Written by Leslie Burby, brought to you by [ProMoM](#).
© 1998-2000 ProMoM, Inc. All rights reserved.

1. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends it

"Human milk is the preferred feeding for all infants, including premature and sick newborns... It is recommended that breastfeeding continue for at least the first 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mutually desired."

(See A.A.P. Breastfeeding Policy Statement: [Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk \(RE9729\)](#))

2. Breastfeeding promotes bonding between mother and baby

Breastfeeding stimulates the release of the hormone oxytocin in the mother's body. "It is now well established that oxytocin, as well as stimulating uterine contractions and milk ejection, promotes the development of maternal behavior and also bonding between mother and offspring." Uvnas-Moberg, Eriksson: Breastfeeding: physiological, endocrine and behavioral adaptations caused by oxytocin and local neurogenic activity in the nipple and mammary gland.: *Acta Paediatrica*, 1996 May, 85(5):525-30

3. Breastfeeding satisfies baby's emotional needs

All babies need to be held. Studies have shown that premature babies are more likely to die if they are not held or stroked. There is no more comforting feeling for an infant of any age than being held close and cuddled while breastfeeding. While many bottle-feeding parents are aware of the importance of cradling their babies while offering the bottle, some are not. Even for parents with good intentions, there is always the temptation to prop up a bottle next to the child, or, when the baby is a little older, to let the child hold his/her own bottle and sit alone. This is emotionally unsatisfying to baby, and can be dangerous physically. An unsupervised child can choke. Also, propping up bottles over night leads to tooth decay.

4. Breast milk provides perfect infant nutrition

"Human milk is uniquely superior for infant feeding and is species-specific; all substitute feeding options differ markedly from it. The breastfed infant is the reference or normative model against which all alternative feeding methods must be measured with regard to growth, health, development, and all other short and long-term benefits."

(See A.A.P. Breastfeeding Policy Statement: [Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk \(RE9729\)](#))

5. Not breastfeeding increases mother's risk of breast cancer

"If all women who do not breastfeed or who breastfeed for less than 3 months were to do so for 4 to 12 months, breast cancer among parous premenopausal women could be reduced by 11 percent, judging from current rates. If all women with children lactated for 24 months or longer, however, then the incidence might be reduced by nearly 25 percent. This reduction would be even greater among women who first lactate at an early age."

Newcomb PA, Storer BE, Longnecker MP, et al. Lactation and a reduced risk of premenopausal breast cancer.

N Engl J Med. 1994;330:81-87

6. Formula feeding increases baby girls' risk of developing breast cancer in later life

Women who were formula-fed as infants have higher rates of breast cancer as adults. For both premenopausal and postmenopausal breast cancer, women who were breastfed as children, even if only for a short time, had a 25% lower risk of developing breast cancer than women who were bottle-fed as infants.

Freudenheim, J. et al. 1994 "Exposure to breast milk in infancy and the risk of breast cancer". *Epidemiology* 5:324-331

7. Formula Feeding is associated with lower I.Q.

The latest study to support this statement was done in New Zealand. Here an 18 year longitudinal study of over 1,000 children found that those who were breastfed as infants had both better intelligence and greater academic achievement than children who were infant-formula fed. Horwood and Fergusson, "Breastfeeding and Later Cognitive and Academic Outcomes", Jan 1998 *Pediatrics* Vol. 101, No. 1

Morrow-Tlucak M, Haude RH, Ernhart CB. Breastfeeding and cognitive development in the first 2 years of life. *Soc Sci Med.* 1988;26:635-639

Lucas A., "Breast Milk and Subsequent Intelligence Quotient in Children Born Preterm". *Lancet* 1992;339:261-62

Wang YS, Wu SY. The effect of exclusive breastfeeding on development and incidence of infection in infants. *J Hum Lactation.* 1996; 12:27-30

8. Breast milk is always ready and comes in a nicer package than formula does

Need we say more?

9. Breast milk helps pass meconium

Babies are born with a sticky tar-like substance called meconium in their intestines. Colostrum, or early milk, is uniquely designed to help move this substance through

the infant's body.

10. Breast milk contains immunities to diseases and aids in the development of baby's immune system.

Formula provides neither of these benefits

Koutras, A.K., "Fecal Secretory Immunoglobulin A in Breast Milk vs. Formula Feeding in Early Infancy". *J. Ped Gastro Nutr* 1989.

11. Breast milk is more digestible than formula

"Babies can digest human milk more easily than the milk of other animals, probably because human milk contains an enzyme that aids in this process. Breast milk forms softer curds in the infant's stomach than cow's milk (the basis for most formulas) and is more quickly assimilated into the body system. While it contains less protein than does cow's milk, virtually all the protein in breast milk is available to the baby. By contrast, about half the protein in cow's milk passes through the baby's body as a waste product. Similarly, iron and zinc are absorbed better by breastfed babies."

The Complete Book Of Breastfeeding M.S. Eiger. MD, S. Wendkos Olds

Copyright 1972, 1987 Comstock, Inc., Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

708 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

12. Suckling helps shrink mother's uterus after childbirth

"Nursing will help you to regain your figure more quickly, since the process of lactation causes the uterus (which has increased during pregnancy to about 20 times its normal size) to shrink more quickly to its prepregnancy size. "

The Complete Book Of Breastfeeding M.S. Eiger. MD, S. Wendkos Olds

Copyright 1972, 1987 Comstock, Inc., Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

708 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

The uterus of the non-breastfeeding mother will never shrink back to its pre-pregnant size. It will always remain slightly enlarged.

Chua S, Arulkumaran S, Lim I et al. "Influence of breastfeeding and nipple stimulation on postpartum uterine activity."

Br J Obstet Gynaecol 1994; 101:804-805

13. Suckling helps prevent post-partum hemorrhage

Nursing her baby causes the mother's body to release oxytocin, which stimulates contractions which help shrink the uterus back to prepregnancy size while expelling the placenta. These contractions also shut off the maternal blood vessels that formerly fed the baby and discourage excessive bleeding. Women who choose not to breastfeed must be given synthetic oxytocin to insure against hemorrhaging.

Chua S, Arulkumaran S, Lim I et al. "Influence of breastfeeding and nipple stimulation on postpartum uterine activity."

Br J Obstet Gynaecol 1994; 101:804-805

14. Nursing helps mom lose weight after baby is born

Breastfeeding requires an average of 500 extra calories per day. Dewey KG, Heinig MJ, Nommsen LA. Maternal weight-loss patterns during prolonged lactation.

Am J Clin Nutr 1993;58:162-166

Mothers who breastfed exclusively or partially had significantly larger reductions in hip circumference and were less above their prepregnancy weights at 1 month post partum than mothers who fed formula exclusively." Kramer, F., "Breastfeeding reduces maternal lower body fat." *J. Am Diet Assoc* 1993; 93(4):429-33

15. Pre-term milk is specially designed for premature infants

"Milk produced by women who deliver prematurely differs from that produced after a full-term pregnancy. Specifically, during the first month after parturition, preterm milk maintains a composition similar to that of colostrum." Hamosh, Margit, PhD, Georgetown University Medical Center "Breast-feeding: Unraveling the Mysteries of Mother's Milk".

16. The World Health Organization and UNICEF recommend it

"...breastfeeding is an unequaled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants; ... it forms a unique biological and emotional basis for the health of both mother and child; ...the anti-infective properties of breast milk help to protect infants against disease; and ... there is an important relationship between breastfeeding and child spacing".(Emphasis added)

(See The WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes).

17. Breastfeeding protects against Crohn's disease (intestinal disorder)

Koletzko S, Sherman P, Corey M, et al. "Role of infant feeding practices in development of Crohn's disease in childhood."

Br Med J. 1989;298:1617-1618

Rigas A, Rigas B, Blassman M, et al. "Breast-feeding and maternal smoking in the etiology of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in childhood." *Ann Epidemiol.* 1993;3387-392

18. Formula feeding increases risk of baby developing type I (juvenile, insulin-dependent) diabetes.

The results of a study in Finland suggest that young age at introduction of dairy products and high milk consumption during childhood increase the level of cow's milk antibodies in the children's systems. This factor is independently associated with increased risk of insulin dependent diabetes. Virtanen et al: "Diet, Cow's milk protein antibodies and the risk of IDDM in Finnish children." Childhood Diabetes in Finland Study Group. *Diabetologia*, Apr 1994, 37(4):381-7

Mayer, EJ, Hamman RF, Gay EC, et al. "Reduced risk of IDDM among breast-fed children". *Diabetes*, 1988;37:1625-1632

Virtanen SM, Rasanen L, Aro A, et al. "Infant feeding in Finnish children <7 yr of age with newly diagnosed IDDM".

Diabetes Care, 1991;14:415-417

Gerstein HC. "Cow's milk exposure and type 1 diabetes mellitus". *Diabetes Care*. 1994;17:13-19

Borch-Johnson, K., et al., "Relation between breastfeeding and incidence of insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus". *Lancet* 2:1083-86 (1984)

19. Breastfeeding decreases insulin requirements for breastfeeding mothers

Reduction in insulin dose postpartum was significantly greater in those who were breastfeeding than those who were bottle feeding. Davies, H.A., "Insulin Requirements of Diabetic Women who Breast Feed." *British Medical Journal*, 1989

20. Breastfeeding stabilizes progress of maternal endometriosis

21. Not breastfeeding increases mother's risk of developing ovarian cancer

Rosenblatt KA, Thomas DB, "WHO Collaborative Study of Neoplasia and Steroid Contraceptives". *Int J Epidemiol*. 1993;22:192-197

Schneider, A.P. "Risk Factor for Ovarian Cancer". *New England Journal of Medicine*, 1987.

22. Not breastfeeding increases mother's risk of developing endometrial cancer

Petterson B, et al. "Menstruation span- a time limited risk factor for endometrial carcinoma". *Acta Obstst Gyneocol Scand* 1986;65:247-55

23. Formula feeding increases chances of baby developing allergies

Lucas A, Brooke OG, Morley R, et al. "Early diet of preterm infants and development of allergic or atopic disease: randomized prospective study". *Br Med J*. 1990;300:837-840

Halken S, Host A, Hansen LG, et al. "Effect of an allergy prevention programme on incidence of atopic symptoms in infancy". *Ann Allergy*. 1992;47:545-553

Saarinen UM, Kajossari M. "Breastfeeding as prophylaxis against atopic disease: prospective follow-up study until 17 years old."

Lancet. 1995;346:1065-1069

24. Breast milk lowers risk of baby developing asthma

Breastfed babies have lower risk for developing recurrent wheezing when they are older (age 6 or more). *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Med.*, July 1995

25. Formula feeding increases baby's risk of otitis media (ear infections)

"Otitis media is up to 3-4 times more prevalent in formula-fed infants".

Aniansson G, Alm B, Andersson B, et al. "A prospective cohort study on breast-feeding and otitis media in Swedish infants". *Pediatr Infect Dis J.* 1994; 13:183-188

Kovar MG, Serdula MK, Marks JS, et al. "Review of the epidemiologic evidence for an association between infant feeding and infant health." *Pediatrics.* 1984;74:S615-S638

Saarinen UM. "Prolonged Breast Feeding as prophylaxis for recurrent otitis media." *Acta Paediatr Scand.* 1982;71:567-571

26. Formula feeding may increase risk of sudden infant death syndrome (S.I.D.S.)

Ford RPK, Taylor BJ, Mitchell EA, et al. "Breastfeeding and the risk of sudden infant death syndrome. *Int J. Epidemiol.* 1993;22:885-890

Mitchell EA, Taylor BJ, Ford RPK, et al. "Four modifiable and other major risk factors for cot death: the New Zealand Study".

J Paediatr Child Health. 1992;28:S3-S8

Scragg LK, Mitchell EA, Tonkin SL, et al. Evaluation of the cot death prevention programme in South Auckland.

NZ Med J. 1993;106:8-10

27. Breastfeeding protects baby against diarrheal infections

Kovar MG, Serdula MK, Marks JS, et al. "Review of the epidemiologic evidence for an association between infant feeding and infant health." *Pediatrics.* 1984;74:S615-S638

Dewey KG, Heinig MJ, Nommsen-Rivers LA. Differences in morbidity between breast-fed. "Differences in morbidity between breast-fed and formula-fed infants." *Pediatr.* 1995;126:696-702

Howie PW, Forsyth JS, Ogston SA, et al. "Protective effect of breast feeding against infection." *Br Med J.* 1990;300:11-16

Popkin BM, Adair L, Akin JS, et al. "Breast-feeding and diarrheal morbidity." *Pediatrics.* 1990;86:874-882

Beaudry M, Dufour R, Marcoux S. "Relation Between infant feeding and infections during the first six months of life." *J Pediatr.* 1995; 126:191-197

28. Breastfeeding protects baby against bacterial meningitis

Cochi SL, Fleming DW, Hightower AW, et al. "Primary invasive *Haemophilus influenzae* type b disease: a population-based assessment of risk factors." *J Pediatr.* 1986;108:997-896

Istre GR, Conner JS, Broome CV, et al. "Risk factors for primary invasive *Haemophilus influenzae* disease: increased risk from day care attendance and school-aged

household members." *J Pediatr*. 1985;106:190-198

29. Breastfeeding protects baby against respiratory infections

Frank AI, Taber LH, Glezen WP, et al. "Breast-feeding and respiratory virus infection." *Pediatrics* 1982;70:239-245

Wright AI, Holberg DJ, Martinez FD, et al. "Breast feeding and lower respiratory tract illness in the first year of life."

Br Med J. 1989;299:935-949

Chen Y. "Synergistic effect of passive smoking and artificial feeding on hospitalization for respiratory illness in early childhood." *Chest*. 1989;95:1004-1007

Wright AL, Holberg CH, Taussig LM, et al. "Relationship of infant feeding to recurrent wheezing at age 6 years."

Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 1995;149:758-763

30. Formula fed babies have a higher risk of developing certain childhood lymphomas

Davis MK, Savitz DA, Graubard BI. "Infant feeding and childhood cancer." *Lancet*. 1988;2:365-368

Shu X-O, Clemens H, Zheng W, et al. "Infant breastfeeding and the risk of childhood lymphoma and leukaemia". *Int J Epidemiol*. 1995;24:27-32

31. Breastfeeding decreases chances of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis

Preliminary data from U. of North Carolina/Duke University researchers indicates breastfed children were only 40% as likely to develop JA. "Mother's Milk: An Ounce of Prevention?" *Arthritis Today* May-June 1994

32. Breastfeeding decreases child's chances of contracting Hodgkins disease

"An Exploratory Study of Environmental and Medical Factors Potentially Related to Childhood Cancer." *Medical & Pediatric Oncology*, 1991; 19(2):115-21

33. Breastfeeding protects baby against vision defects

Birch E, et al. "Breastfeeding and optimal visual development." *J Pediatr Ophthalmol Strabismus* 1993;30:33-8

In a study in Bangladesh, breastfeeding was a protective factor for night blindness among preschool-aged children in both rural and urban areas. Breast milk is generally the main, if not the only source, of vitamin A during a child's first 24 months of life (or for the duration of breastfeeding). Bloem, M. et al. "The role of universal distribution of vitamin A capsules in combatting vitamin A deficiency in Bangladesh.:" *Am J Epidemiol* 1995; 142(8): 843-55

34. Breastfeeding decreases chances of maternal osteoporosis

in later life

The odds that a woman with osteoporosis did not breastfeed her baby was 4 times higher than for a control woman. Blaauw, R. et al. "Risk factors for development of osteoporosis in a South African population." *SAMJ* 1994; 84:328-32

Dr. Alan Lucas, MRC Childhood Nutrition Research Center of London, found that 8-year-olds who were fed formula rather than breast fed as infants, had less developed bone mineralization than those fed breast milk.

Melton LJ, Bryant SC, Wahner HW, et al. "Influence of breastfeeding and other reproductive factors on bone mass later in life." *Osteoporos Int.* 1993;22:684-691

Cumming RG, Klineberg RJ. "Breastfeeding and other reproductive factors and the risk of hip fractures in elderly woman."

Int J Epidemiol 1993;22:684-691

35. Breast milk is an intestinal soother

36. Cows milk is an intestinal irritant

37. Formula-fed babies are more at risk for obesity in later life

38. Breastfed babies have less chance of cardiopulmonary distress while feeding

Bottle-fed babies are at increased risk of cardiopulmonary disturbances, including prolonged airway closure and obstructed respiratory breaths due to repeated swallowing. Koenig HS, Davies Am, Thach BT. "Coordination of breathing, sucking and swallowing during bottle feedings in human infants." *J Appl Physiol* 69: 1629: 1623-1629, 1990.

Infants can experience oxygen saturation below 90% when bottlefeeding. Nine of 50 healthy term infants in one study experienced bradycardia during bottlefeeding. Six of these episodes were preceded by apnea, three showed hypopnea (marked reduction in ventilation) and one had central apnea (no respiratory efforts).

Matthew O, Clark ML, Ponske MH. Apnea, bradycardia, and cyanosis during oral feeding in term neonates." *J Pediatr* 106:857, 1985

39. Breastfed babies have less chance of developing ulcerative colitis

Rigas A, Rigas B, Blassman M, et al. "Breast-feeding and maternal smoking in the etiology of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in childhood." *Ann Epidemiol.* 1993;3:387-392

40. Breast milk protects against hemophilus b. virus

Cochi SL, Fleming DW, Hightower AW, et al. "Primary invasive Haemophilus influenzae type b disease: a population-based assessment of risk factors." *J Pediatr.* 1986;108:997-896

Takala AK, Eskola J, Palmgren J, et al. "Risk factors of invasive Haemophilus

influenzae type b disease among children in Finland.

J Pediatr. 1980;115:695-701

Istre GR, Conner JS, Broome CV, et al. "Risk factors for primary invasive Haemophilus influenzae disease: increased risk from day care attendance and school-aged household members."

J Pediatr. 1985;106:190-198

41. Breastfed babies require shorter pre and post-surgical fasting

Breastfeeding may continue until three hours before arrival time at the hospital in healthy children having elective surgery.

Schreiner, M.S. "Preoperative and Postoperative fasting in children." *Ped Clinics N Amer* 41 (1); 111-20 (1994)

42. Breastfeeding results in less sick days for parents

Since breastfed babies are statistically healthier than their formula fed peers, the parents of breastfed babies spend less time out of work taking care of sick children.

43. Breastfeeding enhances vaccine effectiveness

Breastfed infants showed better serum and secretory responses to peroral and parenteral vaccines than those formula-fed.

Han-Zoric, M., "Antibody responses to parenteral and oral vaccines are impaired by conventional and low protein formulas as compared to breastfeeding." *Acta Paediatr Scand* 1990; 79:1137-42

44. Breastfed babies have less chance of developing necrotizing enterocolitis

Lucas A, Cole TJ. "Breast milk and neonatal necrotizing enterocolitis." *Lancet.* 1990; 336:519-1523

Convert RF, Barman N, Comanico RS, et al. "Prior enteral nutrition with human milk protects against intestinal perforation in infants who develop necrotizing enterocolitis."

Pediatr Res. 1995; 37:305A. Abstract

45. Breastfeeding is a natural contraceptive

This is true only if you are exclusively breastfeeding, and have not yet gotten your period back following childbirth. Night nursing encourages longer amenorrhoea (periodlessness). If you really don't want to get pregnant again, use some back up birth control even if you haven't gotten your period again. You will have no way of knowing when your first ovulation will occur, and by the time you figure it out you may be expecting! Still, generally speaking, breastfeeding contributes to optimum child spacing.

Kennedy KI, Visness CM. "Contraceptive efficacy of lactational amenorrhoea." *Lancet*. 1992; 339:227-230

Gray RH, Campbell OM, Apelo R, et al. "Risk of ovulation during lactation." *Lancet*. 1990; 335:25-29

Labbock MH, Colie C. "Puerperium and breast-feeding." *Curr Opin Obstet Gynecol*. 1992; 4:818-825

46. Breastfeeding is easier than using formula

After the initial start up period, breastfeeding is very easy. All you have to do is lift up your shirt and let the little one latch on. No shopping for formula, bottles, and other supplies. No mixing, heating, refrigerating and cleaning up of formula. If you sleep with your baby, or sleep the baby next to your bed, you can forget about all the disturbing night time rituals associated with formula use. All you have to do is roll over, let the baby latch on, and go back to sleep!

47. Breast milk is free

The added calories a mother must take in are a negligible expense, and nursing clothes are optional. If you need to pump, excellent pumps are available for between \$100 and \$225. They can be used for more than one child, so they are really an investment. Any way you look at it, you'll spend a lot more money if you choose to formula feed.

48. Formula is expensive

The cost of feeding a baby on formula for one year was estimated to be around \$1000 in 1990. It has certainly gotten more expensive since.

Batten W. Hirschman J. Thomas C. Impact of the special supplemental food program on infants. *J Pediatr* 117 II:SIOI-109, 1990

49. Formula costs the government (and taxpayers) millions of dollars

The U.S. government spends over \$500 million a year to provide formula for its WIC supplemental food program.

Batten W. Hirschman J. Thomas C. Impact of the special supplemental food program on infants. *J Pediatr* 117 II:SIOI-109, 1990

50. Breast milk is always the right temperature

Severe burns to babies' mouths have occurred due to improper heating of artificial milks. Even when it's done correctly, it's never fun to try to warm a bottle for a fussing baby.

51. Breast milk always has the right proportions of fat, carbohydrates and protein

Formula companies are constantly adjusting these proportions looking for the best composition. The reality is that a mother's milk composition changes from feeding to feeding depending on the needs of her child.

52. Breast milk acts like a natural tranquilizer for baby

Mother's milk contains chemicals that seem to work like "knock-out drops" for tired babies. Even if baby doesn't fall asleep, he/she will certainly calm down and become more agreeable. If you choose to breastfeed into toddlerhood, you may find that the "terrible twos" never materialize!

53. Breastfeeding acts like a natural tranquilizer for mom

Nursing mothers often joke about falling asleep on the job. The sleep inducing qualities of nursing a baby are remarkable. In fact, new mothers have to be careful to hold a nursing baby in such a way that they will not drop the child when they inevitably nod off. Nursing in bed is a great solution. Even pumping at work can be a great way to calm down and get refocused on a stressful day.

54. Breast milk tastes better than formula

Human breastmilk is remarkably sweet and light. Formula is pasty and bland. Which would you rather eat?

55. Breastfed babies are healthier over-all

(Kaiser Permanente: Internal research to determine benefits of sponsoring an official lactation program)

56. Breastfed babies are less likely to die before their third birthday

Van Den Bogaard, C. "Relationship Between Breast Feeding in Early Childhood and Morbidity in a general Population."

Fan Med, 1991; 23:510-515

57. Breastfed babies require fewer doctor visits

Since breastfed babies are statistically healthier, they see the doctor less often.

(Kaiser Permanente: Internal research to determine benefits of sponsoring an official lactation program)

58. Breastfeeding mothers spend less time and money on doctor visits

In 1995 Kaiser-Permanente Health Maintenance Organization in North Carolina found that formula-fed babies averaged over \$1,400 more per year in additional health care costs than breastfed infants.

(Kaiser Permanente: Internal research to determine benefits of sponsoring an official lactation program)

59. Fewer waste packaging products

No wrappers, canisters, disposable bottles etc...

"If every child in America were bottle-fed, almost 86,000 tons of tin would be needed

to produce 550 million cans for one year's worth of formula. If every mother in Great Britain breastfed, 3000 tons of paper (used for formula labels) would be saved in a year. But formula is not the only problem. Bottles and nipples require plastic, glass, rubber, and silicon; production of these materials can be resource-intensive and often leads to end-products that are not-recyclable. All these products use natural resources, cause pollution in their manufacture and distribution and create trash in their packaging, promotion, and disposal."

"Mother Nature Loves Breastmilk" D. Michels, Pub. various periodicals, available on Internet at greenbm.html

60. No bottles to tote

Unless you're pumping and transporting the milk for later. Even then there are fewer bottles to deal with.

61. Less cow induced global greenhouse gasses

Ridiculous as it may sound, bovine flatulence is a huge contributor to the greenhouse gas problem. Aside from producing vast quantities of methane, cows also contribute their manure and urine to our rivers and ground water.

62. No need to refrigerate

Of course, breast milk stays fresh because it's made on demand.

Even pumped breast milk keeps for a long time outside of the fridge.

(See guidelines for storing breast milk).

63. Cows milk is designed for baby cows

Human milk contains completely different proportions of protein, fat, carbohydrates. Cows milk is designed to help put on weight quickly, grow amazingly fast, and develop only as much brain power as a cow needs. The hormones in cows milk are geared toward cows, not humans. The fact that human beings can even drink the milk of another species is sort of amazing when you stop to think about it.

64. Human milk is designed for baby humans

Baby cows probably wouldn't do very well on it. It's designed to build brains, and to foster gradual physical growth.

65. Natural pain relief for baby

Breast milk actually contains chemicals that suppress pain (endorphins). Aside from this, the comfort a baby derives from being held close and suckling is remarkable. Many a bruise or scrape has been soothed away almost instantly by a few moments of nursing. If you choose to have your child vaccinated, it is a good idea to nurse immediately after he/she receives a vaccination. This soothes the hurt, as well as enhancing the vaccine's effectiveness.

66. Perfect food for sick baby

When a formula fed baby gets a gastrointestinal ailment they are usually put on an

artificial electrolyte solution because formula is too hard for them to digest. Breast milk, however, is easily digested, and soothing to the intestines, so there is no need for artificial and expensive electrolyte solutions. If a baby gets a respiratory illness, formula may cause even more mucus. In contrast, breast milk contains antibodies to these ailments, as well as being highly digestible and not contributing to excess mucous formation.

67. More sleep for mom

Especially if she sleeps with baby, but even if she doesn't. No bottles to prepare and warm.

68. More sleep for baby

A baby that gets its night time needs met quickly is more likely to get right back to sleep than a baby who has to wait for a bottle while crying and swallowing air.

69. More sleep for dad

Again, even if he helps with baby burping, diapering, and toting, there are no bottles to deal with. Also, breastfed babies tend to need much less burping after the first few months.

70. Less equipment to maintain and store

Those bottles, measuring devices, sterilizing equipment and other gadgets take up a lot of shelf space and need a lot of cleaning.

71. Less equipment to buy

Unless you pump. Even if you do have to buy a pump and the basic bottle kit, the savings in cost of formula and additional medical attention make breastfeeding financially well worth trying.

72. Breast milk has never been recalled

Formula has been, sometimes after causing injury or death.

73. Fresh breast milk is never contaminated with bacteria

In fact, it has antibacterial properties.

74. No need to worry about which brand is better

Each artificial breastmilk formula is different from all its competitors, but none of them come close to duplicating the real thing. It can be very stressful for formula feeding mothers to try to determine which brand is the best of the lot. No matter which formula is used "it is increasingly apparent that infant formula can never duplicate human milk. Human milk contains living cells, hormones, active enzymes, immunoglobulins and compounds with unique structures that cannot be replicated in infant formula."

(Quoted from FDA pediatric-nutrition researchers at Abbott Laboratories, writing in March, 1994 issue of Endocrine Regulations.)

75. No need to worry about adding contaminated water

Even in the U.S. our water can contain dangerous elements like lead and aluminum. These contaminants can become concentrated if water is boiled to sterilize it before being added to formula.

76. Breastfeeding helps reduce cruelty to farm animals

Less use of cow's milk equals fewer cows equals less opportunity for animal abuse.

77. Facilitates proper dental and jaw development

"Suckling at the breast is good for a baby's tooth and jaw development. Babies at the breast have to use as much as 60 times more energy to get food than do those drinking from a bottle...As [the babies jaw] muscles are strenuously exercised in suckling, their constant pulling encourages the growth of well-formed jaws and straight, healthy teeth."

The Complete Book Of Breastfeeding M.S. Eiger. MD, S. Wendkos Olds

Copyright 1972, 1987 Comstock, Inc., Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

708 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

"Among breastfed infants, the longer the duration of nursing the lower the incidents of malocclusion."

Labbok, M.H. "Does Breastfeeding Protect against Malocclusion? An Analysis of the 1981 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey".

American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 1987

78. Breastfed babies get fewer cavities

Bottle-fed babies "are at increased risk for baby bottle caries, a destructive dental condition which occurs when a baby is put to bed with a bottle containing formula, milk, juice or other fluids high in carbohydrates. Extensive dental repair may be required at a cost of thousands of dollars."

Loesche WJ/ "Nutrition and dental decay in infants." *Am J Clin Nutr* 41; 423-435, 1985

79. Less money spent on corrective orthodontia

If the teeth come in straight, there's no need to fix them.

80. Better speech development

Tongue thrust problems often develop among bottle-fed babies as they try to slow down the flow of milk coming from the artificial nipple. This can lead to speech problems, as well as "mouth breathing, lip biting, gum disease, and a generally unattractive appearance."

The Complete Book Of Breastfeeding M.S. Eiger. MD, S. Wendkos Olds

Copyright 1972, 1987 Comstock, Inc., Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

708 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

81. Less chance of baby getting eczema

"We conclude that breastfeeding is prophylactic against atopic disease, the effect extending into early adulthood. Breastfeeding for longer than 1 month without other milk supplements offers significant prophylaxis against food allergy at 3 years of age, and also against respiratory allergy at 17 years of age. Six months of breastfeeding is required to prevent eczema during the first 3 years, and possibly also to prevent substantial atopy in adolescence." The differences by infant feeding method were so pronounced that they "suggested an influence of early milk feeding that may exceed the heredity burden.

Saarinen UM, Kajosaari M. "Breastfeeding as prophylaxis against atopic disease: prospective follow-up study until 17 years of age." *Lancet*. 1995; 346:1065-69.

Eczema was less common and milder in babies who were breast fed (22%) and whose Mothers were on a restricted diet (48%). In infants fed casein hydrolysate, soymilk, or cows milk, 21%, 63% and 70% respectively, developed atopic eczema.

Chandra R.K., "Influence of Maternal Diet During Lactation and the Use of Formula Feed an Development of Atopic Eczema in the High Risk Infants". *Br Med J*. 1989

82. Breastfed babies have great skin

This is not based on a formal study. Check out the skin of a breastfed baby and see what you think.

83. Less gastrointestinal reflux (Spit-up)

Breastfed neonates demonstrate gastroesophageal reflux episodes of significantly shorter duration than formula fed neonates.

Heacock, H.J. "Influence of Breast vs Formula Milk in Physiologic Gastroesophageal Reflux in Healthy Newborn Infants".

Jour. Pediatr Gastroenterol Nutr, 1992 January; 14(1): 41-6

84. Easier to clean spit-up stains

O.K. This is only based on a casual survey of a lot of breastfeeding mothers. We notice that the hand-me-down clothes we receive from bottle-fed babies have nasty brown staining all over the collars and fronts. Our breastfed babies never created these sorts of spit-up stains. How many newborn breastfed babies do you see wearing bibs all the time?

85. Breast milk contains no genetically engineered materials

Most consumers are completely unaware of how much genetically engineered food they are consuming because the U.S. government does not require this food to be labeled as such. Genetic ID, a company in Fairfield, Iowa, tested four soy-based baby formulas for genetically engineered ingredients. All four, Carnation Alsoy, Similac Neocare, Isomil and Enfamil Prosoabee, tested positive.

(See "Biotechnology's Bounty", M.Burros, *N.Y. Times* 05/21/97

86. Contains no synthetic growth hormones

Since many cows in the U.S. are now routinely ingesting synthetic growth hormones to artificially increase their milk production, it stands to reason that these hormones are also getting into the U.S. formulas.

87. Lack of breastfeeding associated with multiple sclerosis

Although thought to be multifactorial in origin, and without a clearly defined etiology, lack of breastfeeding does appear to be associated with an increased incidence of multiple sclerosis.

Dick, G. "The Etiology of Multiple Sclerosis." *Proc Roy Soc Med* 1989;69;611-5

88. Less chance of inguinal hernia

The inguinal canal brings down the spermatic cord and certain vessels to the groin area . A hernia is a defect in the opening where these things pass through from the abdomen to the groin because the canal opening gets too big or tears off. The hernia allows abdominal contents to get down into the groin area.

Breastfeeding is protective against inguinal hernias. For unknown reasons breastfed babies experience significantly fewer of them. Human milk contains gonadotropin releasing hormone, which may affect the maturation of neonatal testicular function. One recent case control study showed breastfed infants had a significant dose response reduction in inguinal hernia. Pisacane, A. "Breast-feeding and inguinal hernia" *Journal of Pediatrics* 1995:

Vol 127, No. 1, pp 109-111

89. Better cognitive development

In 771 low birth weight infants, babies whose mothers chose to provide breast milk had an 8 point advantage in mean Bayley's mental developmental index over infants of mothers choosing not to do so.

Morley, R., "Mothers Choice to provide Breast Milk and Developmental Outcome".

Arch Dis Child, 1988

90. Better social development

The psychomotor and social development of breastfed babies clearly differs from that of bottlefed ones and leads at the age of 12 months to significant advantages of the psychomotor and social capabilities.

Baumgartner, C., "Psychomotor and Social Development of Breast Fed and Bottle Fed babies During their First year of Life".

Acta Paediatrica Hungarica, 1984

91. Decreased risk of baby developing urinary tract infections

(Kaiser Permanente: Internal research to determine benefits of sponsoring an official lactation program)

92. Suckling optimizes hand-to-eye coordination

Baumgartner, C., "Psychomotor and Social Development of Breast Fed and Bottle Fed babies During their First year of Life". *Acta Paediatrica Hungarica 1984*; 25(4): 409-17

93. Protects mothers against anemia (iron deficiency)

Since many exclusively breastfeeding mothers do not begin to menstruate for a year or longer their iron stores are not depleted by monthly bleeding.

94. Less money spent on menstrual supplies

Many breastfeeding moms do not begin to menstruate again until 14 or more months after giving birth. " Multiply this by the four million US births each year to see that over one billion sanitary products annually could be kept out of our nation's landfills and sewers. To compound the scenario, because breastmilk is absorbed by babies more efficiently, breastfed babies excrete less and thus require fewer diaper changes than formula-fed babies."

"Mother Nature Loves Breastmilk" D. Michels, Pub. various periodicals, available on Internet at greenbm.htm

95. Self confidence booster for mom

There is nothing more amazing than looking at a plump six month old baby and knowing that the only nutrition this happy little creature has received has come from your own body.

96. Breast milk is good for combatting eye infections

Breast milk contains natural antibiotic qualities, and many mothers swear that a squirt in the irritated eye of their baby has cleared up the problem in short order.

97. Breast milk is a good natural antibiotic for wounds

98. No worry about latest ingredient discovered to be missing from formula

"Formula" is really a formula for synthetic human milk. There is no real formula that can duplicate human milk because, as the FDA said recognized in a recent statement "...the exact chemical makeup of breast milk is still unknown."

"Formula-fed infants depend on products which can be quite different from each other, but which are continually being found deficient in essential nutrients... These nutrients are then added, usually after damage has occurred in infants or overwhelming market pressure forces the issue." M. Walker, R.N., International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, *The Journal Of Human Lactation*, Sept 1993

99. Much nicer diaper changes

The bowel movements of breastfed babies smell mild and inoffensive. The same can not be said about those of formula fed babies. Try changing a few formula fed babies if you are uncertain about wanting to try breastfeeding!

100. Breastfed babies smell fantastic

Again, this is not a scientific study. There is something almost magical about the scent of your own breastfed baby, whether you're the mother or father involved. Try it, you'll like it!

101. It's what breasts were designed for!

This information is furnished to you by Leslie Burby and [ProMoM, Inc.](#) as a public service.
It is in no way intended as medical advice, or meant to replace the services of a licensed medical professional.