

# Summary of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

## Policy on Breastfeeding and Use of Human Milk

### **Benefits:**

Most health professionals are familiar with the benefits of breastfeeding. The AAP continues to support the unequivocal evidence that breastfeeding protects against a variety of diseases and conditions in the infant such as:

- bacterial meningitis
- bacteremia
- diarrhea
- respiratory tract infection
- necrotizing enterocolitis
- otitis media
- urinary tract infection
- late-onset sepsis in preterm infants
- type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- lymphoma, leukemia, and Hodgkins disease
- childhood overweight and obesity

There are also maternal health benefits to breastfeeding such as:

- decreased postpartum bleeding and more rapid uterine involution
- decreased menstrual blood loss and increased child spacing (lactational amenorrhea)
- earlier return to pre-pregnancy weight
- decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers

Breastfeeding is also a great benefit to the environment and society. Breastfeeding families are sick less often and the parents miss less work. It does not require the use of energy for manufacturing or create waste or air pollution. There is no risk of contamination and it is always at the right temperature and ready to feed.

### **Contraindications to breastfeeding:**

The only true contraindications to breastfeeding are the following:

- infants with classic galactosemia (galactose 1-phosphate uridylyltransferase deficiency)
- in the US, mothers who are infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- refer to the AAP policy statement for other conditions that may require further investigation ([www.aap.org/breastfeeding](http://www.aap.org/breastfeeding))

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### ***Breastfeeding is NOT contraindicated with the following conditions:***

- infants born to mothers who are hepatitis B surface antigen-positive
- mothers who are infected with hepatitis C virus (persons with hepatitis C virus antibody or hepatitis C virus-RNA-positive blood)
- mothers who are febrile (unless cause is a contraindication outlined in the previous section)
- mothers who have been exposed to low-level environmental chemical agents
- mothers who are seropositive carriers of cytomegalovirus (CMV) (not recent converters if the infant is term)
- mothers who smoke tobacco (though they should be encouraged to quit) or have an occasional celebratory drink
- the great majority of babies with jaundice or hyperbilirubinemia can continue to be breastfed without interruption

### ***The Pediatrician's Role:***

Pediatricians can play a key role in promoting breastfeeding and supporting families. You can:

- communicate the benefits of breastfeeding and the risks of formula feeding to all of your patients
- educate yourself about breastfeeding and how to care for breastfeeding families in your practice
- know how to assess breastfeeding and manage common breastfeeding problems
- know the local resources available to you and your patients (WIC, breastfeeding support groups, lactation consultants, breast pump rental stations, etc.)
- understand how to use breastfeeding equipment and be able to support women who wish to return to work or school while breastfeeding
- display positive images of breastfeeding in your office and encourage the elimination of practices that interfere with breastfeeding (free formula, industry gifts, or coupons to parents, separation of mother and infant, inappropriate feeding images, etc.)
- support breastfeeding research and advocate for positive media coverage about breastfeeding

### ***For more information on breastfeeding visit:***

- the AAP's Health Professional's Resource Guide:  
<http://www.aap.org/breastfeeding/healthProfessionalsResourceGuide.html>
- Identify your local Chapter Breastfeeding Contact
  - Chapter Breastfeeding Coordinators (CBCs) are pediatricians who are appointed by their AAP Chapter President to work within their AAP Chapter and the community on breastfeeding support and promotion. CBCs ensure that the members of their AAP Chapter are up to date on the latest breastfeeding education and advocacy activities.
  - Find the roster of CBCs here:  
<http://www.aap.org/breastfeeding/files/pdf/CBCRoster.pdf>