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breastfeeding



Breastfeeding & the Holidays

Shelby Hayes, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Breastfeeding through the holidays can sometimes be tricky for new moms. There are parties to attend, family to visit, shopping and wrapping to do and lots of baking. These activities can change daily breastfeeding routines.

But the good news is babies are portable and so is breastfeeding! Focusing on your baby and breastfeeding helps to protect your supply and will help keep your infant healthy, especially during these times of extra germ exposures from relatives and friends.

Along with all the extra festivities, you may also get unwanted advice from family members on how you feed your baby, so it's always a good idea to talk to your family about your feeding decisions and let them know that you appreciate their support in your decision to breastfeed!

If you are traveling during the holidays or just on the go more than usual, be sure to plan ahead and bring the things that make nursing easier for you and your baby, whether that be a nursing pillow, cover up or your breast pump.

With a little planning you'll be able to enjoy family time, make special memories with your family and friends, and still continue to give your baby one of the best gifts he or she will receive. Enjoy these special moments this holiday season!

Source: USDA

Peppermint: Friend or Foe for Breastfeeders?

Shelby Hayes, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

'Tis the season for all things peppermint; from candy canes to peppermint lattes!

Have you heard that peppermint can decrease your milk supply? It's been commonly reported that peppermint and spearmint can decrease milk supply, usually when taken in large amounts, like during the holidays, or when using essential oils.

Most of the time, the occasional cup of peppermint tea or a candy cane will not cause a problem. You would have to eat a LOT of candy canes to notice a huge drop in your milk supply, however if you struggle with low milk supply already, this is something to be mindful of, and you may want to limit your consumption of peppermint and keep an eye on your milk output.

As always, the best way to increase your milk supply is with frequent nursing or pumping, so with the busy holiday season approaching be sure to keep nursing on demand and not stress too much over what foods may or may not cause a problem with milk supply.

Source: www.lactation.com

November/December
2024



Q: Will exercise affect my milk supply?

Answer: It depends what the exercise is. Women with babies have always worked - they couldn't afford not to. Often this work involved fairly strenuous manual labor.

We also feel better when we get exercise, and this is certainly good for both mother and baby.

Some important points to bear in mind are:

- Check with your doctor for clearance to begin any exercise or activity.
- Wait until the baby is at least 6 weeks old or more.
- Start the exercise slowly and gradually.
- Be sure to consume liquids to replace those lost by sweating.
- Some kinds of exercise can be done with baby.
- Walking briskly, mild aerobic exercises and water exercises are ideal in the beginning.
- Other good exercises for later on are swimming and aerobics.

Source: LaLeche League

The Pump Act

Shelby Hayes, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Are you worried about returning to work after having your baby? Keeping your milk supply up while working a full or part time job is doable! You will want to **pump about every 2-3 hours during your work day.** It's best to talk to your employer, prior to the delivery of your baby, about your plans for pumping when you return to work. This helps to ensure that you are both on the same page as to expectations for when you return.

The **Pump for Nursing Mothers Act** requires employers to provide the following:

- A reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for their nursing child.
- A place to pump at work, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from the public and co-workers.

These accommodations must be provided for one year after the child's birth and be available each time an employee needs it.

Source: www.usbreastfeeding.org

Life, Breastfeeding and Do-Overs

Anita Perry, RN, IBCLC

Ahhh....Christmas. Gee, it came really fast this year! Seems like 2024 went screeching through my life at supersonic speed! I thought maybe it was just me. You know, getting older. But, I've actually heard the same things from a lot of others, who by the way are MUCH younger than me.

Christmas is the last big thing of the year, and there never seems enough time to get everything done. Then I spend the first few months of the new year trying to catch up from the holidays...catch up sleep (ha), catch up better eating habits (ha), catch up with the checking account/bills (ha), etc...

And then, doesn't it seem like we never really catch up and poof...it's time to do it all again?

Life does seem to be a constant string of "do-overs," or "do-agains." I read a saying recently that said, "Life may knock you down. Just make sure you get back up!" I think that's the meaning here. Just keep on keeping on, and enjoying it all in the process.

It's like that with breastfeeding. Some days you just don't know how you are going to keep it up. But, with persistence, grit, determination, and hopefully support, you just keep on.... taking it one day at a time. Every day can become a "do-over." Before you know it a month has gone by, 3 months, 6 months, a year! Time really does fly by.

In the meantime, try to stay focused on the positives of the Christmas season. Make sure you remember to take care of yourself, to get your rest, eat healthy, and try to stay within your budget.

Just like breastfeeding, it takes persistence and support. It will make the New Year that much brighter!



Mom of the Month

Kati Johnson & Mercy

My most favorite thing about breastfeeding is the opportunity to bond with Mercy one on one.

I also love that breastfeeding provides protection against some illnesses & diseases.

Mercy is our last baby, so I was determined to be successful at breastfeeding because, I wasn't with my first two.

Breastfeeding definitely has challenges, I have to make sure I'm drinking plenty of water daily and that my protein and calorie intake are higher than the average because that helps increase your supply.

Another challenge breastfeeding can bring is time, finding the time to sit and pump and/or making yourself get up at night to pump.

Breastfeeding, although has its challenges, is the best decision I could have made for my baby.

I would choose to face those challenges any and everyday to provide the best for her!

Livingston County Health
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