



Breastfeeding Recommendations: Initiation and Duration

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) recommend that initiation of breastfeeding occur within the first hour of life. ²
- Breast milk within the first few days of lactation, called colostrum, is filled with antibodies and growth proteins. It also helps develop the infant’s digestive system. ³
- It is recommended infants be exclusively breastfed (consumption of human milk with no other liquid or food, including water) for the first six months and continue breastfeeding until at least 12 months.¹
- Some women cannot or should not breastfeed, and every woman should speak with her health care provider to determine what is right for her and her infant.¹

Wyoming Department of Health Goals

Wyoming’s Maternal and Family Health Unit selected breastfeeding as a state health priority for the 2011-2015 Maternal and Child Health Block Grant which provides federal funding for maternal, child and infant health improvement. The focus areas for breastfeeding are:

1. Provide training opportunities for Wyoming health professionals
2. Support breastfeeding policies and partners



Health Benefits For Baby¹

- Protects against infection
- Reduced risk of:
 - Childhood obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Diarrhea
 - Allergic disease
 - Respiratory tract infections
 - Gastrointestinal tract infections
 - Sudden infant death syndrome

Health Benefits for Mom¹

- Return to pre-pregnancy weight faster
- Reduced risk of:
 - Diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - Breast and ovarian cancer
 - Postpartum bleeding

Other Benefits

- Save \$1,200 in formula costs in the first year alone⁴
- One-day absences from work to care for sick children occur less than half as often for mothers of breastfed infants compared to formula fed infants¹
- Promotes bonding between mother and child¹
- The most environmentally sound option: natural, renewable, and no packages involved¹



Wyoming Department of Health

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Maternal and Family Health Priority Overview

Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration



Wyoming PRAMS, 2007-2010

Barriers to Initiation:

From 2007-2010, 85.8% of Wyoming women initiated breastfeeding. Reasons for not initiating breastfeeding were collected in WY PRAMS from 2007-2008.

The two most common reasons reported for not initiating breastfeeding were dislike (35.4%) and other reasons (31.9%).

Break the Barrier: Public Health Nurses in Wyoming; Women, Infant and Children (WIC) staff; and/or your health care provider can provide you with support to begin breastfeeding or to make it a more comfortable experience.

One in five women (19.8%) reported going back to school or work as a barrier to breastfeeding.

Break the Barrier: While it is difficult to find time to breastfeed or pump at work/school, most employers are required to give you breaks, private area to express milk and provide a safe place to store milk. Go to www.wybreastfeedatwork.org to learn more.



Barriers to Continued Breastfeeding:

From 2007-2008, the percent of women breastfeeding in Wyoming at four weeks was 72.5%. By 16 weeks, the percent of women still breastfeeding had fallen to 48.1%.

The three most commonly cited reasons for discontinuing breast feeding were: women thought that they were not producing enough milk (44.1%), women thought breast milk alone did not satisfy their infant (37%), and difficulty nursing (27.4%).

Break the Barriers: Talking with a Public Health Nurse, your or your baby's health care provider, or with WIC staff, can help prepare you to face these potential barriers. Ask a PHN about the "Happiest Baby on the Block" program that empowers parents to soothe babies which may also help women continue breastfeeding.

References:

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. Breastfeeding and the use of human milk. *Pediatrics* 2005;115(2):496-506.
2. World Health Organization. Exclusive Breastfeeding. Available at: http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive_breastfeeding/en/. Accessed Jan 24 2011.
3. League LL. What is Colostrum? How does it Benefit My Baby? Available at: <http://www.lllii.org/FAQ/colostrum.html>. Accessed Jan 26 2011.
4. Ball TM, Wright AL. Health care costs of formula-feeding in the first year of life. *Pediatrics* 1999;103(4 Pt 2):870-6.



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