



## Benefits of Breastfeeding

**Breastmilk is all your baby needs for the first six months of life.** Babies need no other food or fluid, including water. Introducing other food or fluids can cause problems for breastfeeding and your baby's health. There are many reasons why it's a good idea to consider breastfeeding and Day Kimball Hospital would like to present a few of them:

### *For Baby:*

- Human milk gives a baby all the nutrients they need in exactly the right proportions. It is more easily digested and is gentler on baby's stomach than artificial infant milk or formula.
- Human milk contains special nutrients, not found in artificial formulas, which aid in brain growth and nervous system development. Research shows that breastfed children had higher IQs.
- Lack of breastfeeding is a risk factor for SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of allergies, eczema and asthma.
- Breastfeeding reduces the incidence, and lessens the severity of a large number of infections, including pneumonia and meningitis.
- Mothers milk changes throughout nursing to meet the baby's specific needs at a given time
- Formula fed babies have twice the risk of ear infections in the first year than babies who are breastfed exclusively for at least 4 months.
- Diapers smell less
- Children who are breastfed have a lower risk of becoming overweight, even as adults.
- No chance for a mistake in mixing/contaminating the solution

### *For the mother and family:*

- Breastfeeding is much more convenient than formula- breast milk is always ready, at the right temperature, needs no preparation, requires no shopping and doesn't require extra equipment such as bottles or extra nipples.
- Releases prolactin and oxytocin, calming, relaxing hormones
- Much cheaper than buying artificial milk/formula
- Creates a special time for mother-baby bonding
- Saves money because of fewer doctor or ER visits and fewer medicines to buy. There is ten times lower risk of hospitalization in a breastfed baby's first year compared to an artificial milk/formula fed baby.
- Makes comforting baby easier
- Helps mothers lose weight stored during pregnancy
- Reduces mothers risk of ovarian and breast cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and depression
- Helps mothers' uterus contract back into shape faster. Therefore you lose less blood and heal faster.
- Helps parents miss fewer work days because of a sick child
- It's Green! Less garbage from bottles, packaging, cans, etc.

You are special because you can make the food that is uniquely perfect for your baby. Invest the time in yourself and your baby — for your health and for the bond that will last a lifetime.