

Why Should I *Breastfeed My Baby?*

The evidence is clear:

Breastmilk Is Healthier Than Formula

Designed by nature, breastmilk is the most complete form of nutrition for your baby. Formula cannot match breastmilk's unique composition or the beneficial substances that only breastmilk contains. Breastmilk:

- Contains the perfect amounts of protein, fat, sugar, and water for your baby's growth and development
- Is easier for most babies to digest than formula
- Changes naturally to meet your growing baby's needs
- Contains antibodies that help protect your baby from illness
- Contains substances essential for optimal development of your baby's brain

Breastfeeding is the best way to nourish your baby. Based on years of research, leading healthcare associations and government health agencies around the world all agree that breastmilk is the best first food for babies.

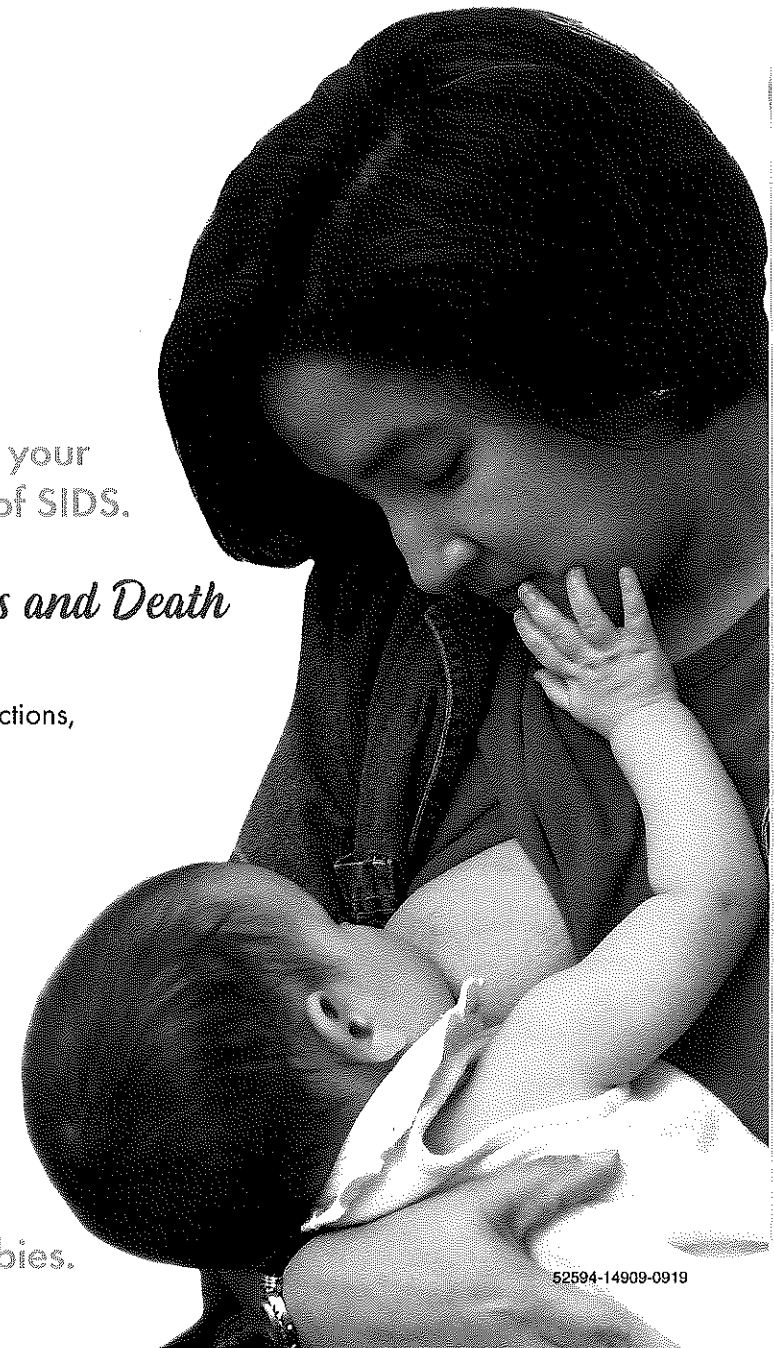
Breastfeeding may reduce your baby's risk of SIDS.

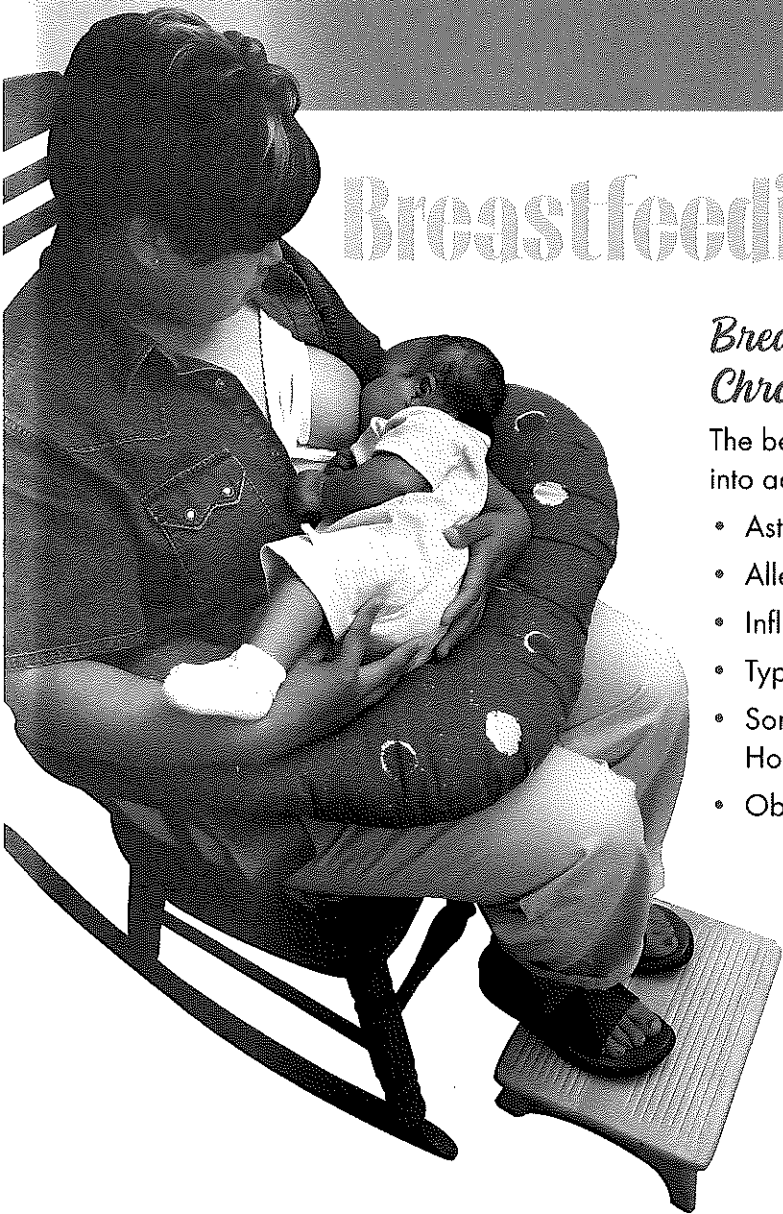
Breastfeeding Helps Protect From Illness and Death

Breastfed babies:

- Are at lower risk of diarrhea, urinary tract infections, ear infections, respiratory infections such as pneumonia, and meningitis
- Get sick less often, have fewer symptoms and shorter illnesses when they do get sick, and are less likely to need hospitalization
- Are free from risk of infection from contaminated formula, including infant formula powder, which is not sterile
- May be less likely to die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

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is the best first food for babies.





Breastfeeding

may decrease your and your baby's risk for certain types of cancer.

Breastfeeding Helps Protect From Chronic Conditions and Diseases

The benefits of breastfeeding may help protect your baby even into adulthood. Breastfeeding may reduce your baby's risk of:

- Asthma
- Allergies including eczema
- Inflammatory bowel diseases
- Type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- Some forms of cancer including leukemia and Hodgkin's disease
- Obesity

Breastfeeding Helps Maximize Mental and Physical Development

Children who were breastfed may:

- Score higher on IQ tests
- Have better vision
- Have fewer dental cavities and be less likely to need braces

Breastfeeding Is Good for You, Too

Breastfeeding offers many benefits to mothers as well as babies and may:

- Help your uterus return to its pre-pregnancy size more quickly
- Help you return to your pre-pregnancy weight
- Lessen your postpartum bleeding
- Reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes
- Lower your risk of breast and ovarian cancers

It is recommended that babies be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life. Breastfeeding should be continued as complementary foods are introduced, until a baby is at least 12 months of age. To learn more about breastfeeding your baby, contact a lactation consultant or your healthcare professional.

For the best start,
breastfeed exclusively for your
baby's first 6 months.

The information contained in this tear pad is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional.