

## Risks of Not Breastfeeding



### For Infants

It may not seem like offering your baby a bottle of infant formula has any consequences. However, it does. And there are some drawbacks to just one bottle, and more to more feedings of infant formula. Before you make a decision, consider these things. Ask your nurse, physician or lactation consultant for more details if you have questions.

#### **Increased risk of**

- ✓ Infections (lung and GI tract)
- ✓ Childhood obesity
- ✓ Type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- ✓ Childhood cancer
- ✓ Sudden infant death syndrome
- ✓ Otitis media (ear infections)
- ✓ Lower respiratory tract infections
- ✓ Asthma
- ✓ Atopic dermatitis (skin allergies)
- ✓ Heart disease and high blood pressure
- ✓ Diarrhea
- ✓ Necrotizing Enterocolitis in premature infants
- ✓ Colic and stomach upset
- ✓ Change the digestive bacteria in your baby's GI tract
- ✓ Dental malocclusion

#### **If you are breastfeeding, offering a bottle can:**

- ✓ Reduce your breastmilk supply
- ✓ Change your baby's suck at the breast
- ✓ Reduce your baby's desire to breastfeed

**If infants were breastfed optimally (6 months exclusively, continuing for a year or more), it would save 911 infant lives and \$13 billion annually.**

Bartick M, Reinhold A. The Burden of Suboptimal Breastfeeding in the United States: A Pediatric Cost Analysis. *Pediatrics* 125:5, 2010

### For Mothers

It may be surprising that there are benefits of breastfeeding for mothers of breastfed infants. The longer the mother breastfeeds, the more the benefits.

#### **Increased risk of:**

- ✓ Premenopausal breast cancer
- ✓ Ovarian cancer
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ Retained pregnancy weight gain
- ✓ Type 2 diabetes
- ✓ Myocardial infarction (heart attack)
- ✓ Metabolic syndrome
- ✓ Osteoporosis
- ✓ Rheumatoid arthritis

**If infants were breastfed optimally (6 months exclusively, continuing for a year or more), it would save \$14.4 billion in premature death, \$733.7 million in direct care costs and \$126.1 million in indirect costs for only 3 diagnoses (breast cancer, hypertension, and MI) annually.**

Bartick M. Mothers' costs of suboptimal breastfeeding: implications of the maternal disease cost analysis. *Breastfeed Med.* 2013 Oct;8(5):448-9.

In addition, there is the risk of possible contaminated formula or improper preparation of ingredients. There have been several recalls by formula manufacturers in recent years.

***The Centers for Disease Control, The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization and other professional groups involved in infant health, all recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, and then continue for 1-2 years with the gradual introduction of solid foods.***

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