

The Benefits of Breastfeeding

Jamilah Ellis, Breastfeeding Educator

There are things that your breast milk can provide for your child that they can't get from any other source, and so helping them, like, take hold of that power that you have to really impact your child's health in a positive way.

Sahira Long, MD, Pediatrician

Women know that there are benefits to breastfeeding, but they don't necessarily know that they're putting their children at certain risk if they choose not to breastfeed. Children who are breastfed have a lower risk of becoming obese. The imprint that's placed in infancy of learning when you're hungry and when you're full is set by the baby as opposed to a bottle.

Ekere Ekandem Olojala, Mary's Center WIC Director

As mothers we are concerned with the baby finishing the bottle. With breastfeeding, they move at their own pace when they're feeding. They also have less problems with ear infections, no problems with being constipated, because breast milk is easily digested.

Sahira Long, MD, Pediatrician

There is a much higher incidence of asthma in the African-American community, where, because asthma is more of an allergic and inflammatory process, the thought is that different antibodies and cytokines that the body, that breast milk has, that formula doesn't provide that protection as moms nurse. So moms get exposed to everything throughout the day and their bodies automatically start making defenses against it, and so that defense is passed in the form of antibodies through the breast milk.

Jamilah Ellis, Breastfeeding Educator

The benefits that I personally experienced from breastfeeding was the relationship that I dealt with each of my children, kind of having that one-on-one time on a regular basis, like every day.

Sahira Long, MD, Pediatrician

Decreased respiratory infections, decreased ear infections, decreased stomach infections. So parents always want to know "what can I do to keep my child from getting sick," and this is one that, you know, vaccines are definitely key, but this is, to me, the first vaccine.