

# Benefits of Breastfeeding

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## **What are the benefits of breastfeeding for babies:**

Compared with babies fed with formula, breastfed babies have:

- Better digestion and protection from stomach infections, such as vomiting and diarrhea.
- A reduced risk of lung infections, ear infections, asthma and wheezing.
- Some studies suggest that breastfeeding reduces the risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.

## **What are the benefits for women?**

Compared with mothers who feed formula, women who breastfeed have:

- Less bleeding after childbirth
- Less stress
- Increased weight loss after pregnancy (if breastfeeding continues for at least six months).
- Decreased risk of breast cancer

## **What are the benefits for the family?**

Families who breastfeed have:

- Reduced infant feeding costs. Infant formula and associated supplies are estimated to cost at least \$1000 during the first 12 months.
- Reduced costs related to healthcare, including doctor's visits, hospital costs, and lost time from work. Breastfed Infants are less likely to become ill and less likely to be hospitalized. This reduces the potential costs and anxiety of caring for an ill child.

The benefits for baby and mother increase as breastfeeding continues. However, even breastfeeding for a short period of time provides some benefits to the baby.

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