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## AAP Policy on Breastfeeding

The American Academy of Pediatrics writes policy statements to help to guide pediatricians on how they should care for patients related to a particular health topic. The [AAP policy statement about breastfeeding](#) details why breastfeeding is best for babies and mothers and how pediatricians can support them to be successful. This is a summary of that policy statement for families:

### Benefits

#### *For the baby*

Breastfeeding decreases the possibility that your baby will get a variety of infectious diseases, ear infections, diarrhea, etc.

#### *For the mother*

Breastfeeding mothers return to their pre-pregnancy weight faster and have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancer. They also experience less postpartum bleeding, as the hormones that help with breastfeeding also make the uterus contract.

#### *For the family*

Breastfeeding facilitates bonding. Fathers and other children can participate by helping the mother with burping and rocking the baby, making sure the mother is eating and drinking enough, and helping with breast pump equipment and bottles.

#### *For the community*

Breastfeeding is lean, green, and clean. Breastfed babies are at a lower risk of being obese children. Breastfeeding won't put a huge dent in your wallet, it saves water, and it doesn't use energy for manufacturing or pollute the environment with garbage or manufacturing air pollution. There is no worry about the risk of contamination from bacteria or other substances. It is always fresh, at the right temperature, and ready to feed!

### Reasons not to breastfeed:

There are very few reasons not to breastfeed. Mothers make good healthy milk even if their diets are not full of nutritious foods. Tattoos, piercings and breast surgery often do not interfere with breastfeeding. Most mothers who need medications for chronic conditions can breastfeed safely. Talk to your baby's doctor, and/or your doctor or nurse midwife to determine if breastfeeding is the right choice for you.

### NOT reasons *not* to breastfeed:

There are also a few reasons that you may *think* might make it impossible for you to breastfeed. This may not be the case. Talk to your doctor about any illnesses or conditions you may have, if you smoke, or if you are taking medications. Many medications are compatible with breastfeeding and although you should be encouraged to quit smoking if you smoke, smoking cigarettes is not a reason not to breastfeed.

### Families

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