

Family Medicine Clerkship Plain Language Summary Template

Title: Breastfeeding - How it can help *you!*

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Plain Language Summary:

The decision to breastfeed is different for each mother. It is known that feeding babies mother's milk has many health benefits for the baby, helps mothers and babies to bond and can save money.

Now, more research has been done to show that lactation can be beneficial for mom, too! Not only for the time she is breastfeeding, but for even 20 years after. This is especially true for mom's who have failed their "sugar" or "diabetes" test in pregnancy and have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes mellitus during one or more of her pregnancies.

The major studied health benefit for mom is to protect against what is known as "metabolic syndrome". This syndrome is a group of common health problems. Having a diagnosis of metabolic syndrome means a patient has three out of the five following things: a large waist size or an "apple" shaped body, high blood pressure, high levels of fat in your blood, high cholesterol and high blood sugar or diabetes. Metabolic syndrome is important to prevent because it can increase the risk of having heart disease, stroke or diabetes.

Preventing things associated with metabolic syndrome is another reason woman should try to breastfeed. It is shown that the longer a woman can breastfeed, the more help it can be for her future health. The most successful a mom can be is to breastfeed for nine months or longer. Nine months or longer has the best protective effect for mom against metabolic syndrome. However, any length of lactation for more than one month is better than none.

Helping a mother avoid getting metabolic syndrome is just one more great reason for women to breastfeed. There are resources to help plan to breastfeed before the baby is born. There are special nurses in the hospital to help with this, too. If a woman needs to go back to work, there are resources to help get a breast pump. This will allow a woman to continue to lactate and feed the baby with pumped milk in bottles. Each step along the way can make a mother more successful in her lactation plan.



Additional Resources:

To find a support group for breastfeeding right here in the Twin Cities, visit:

<http://www.llusa.org/>

For general information, support, video clips, Q&A and more visit:

<http://www.breastfeeding.com/>

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/>

To learn more about metabolic syndrome, visit:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/metabolic%20syndrome/DS00522>

Key Words:

Lactation

Breastfeeding

Metabolic Syndrome

Insulin Resistance

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

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