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BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2023

Compiled by the Ghanaian Editorial Team



Breast milk is produced by the mother shortly after the delivery of a baby and serves primarily as food and water for the baby.

For **the initial months after birth, the baby gets all the energy and nutrients they need from breast milk.** It also provides more than half of their nutritional needs in the latter half of the first year, and about a third in the second year of life.

The **colostrum** is the first breast milk that a mother produces after giving birth. **It has a lot of proteins and antibodies that help babies get the nutrition they need in their first weeks of life.** Breast milk adapts to every baby and its nutritional component changes to match the baby's nutritional needs.

“Breastfeeding is best feeding”

Breastfeeding provides essential benefits for the health and development of a child from the first moments of their life. **It is the most effective intervention for child survival and development.**

Breastfeeding has many advantages for both the mother and the baby such as:

- It provides a **hygienic and convenient** way of feeding the baby
- It offers a complete and **balanced nutrition** for the baby
- It helps the baby **fight against infections** by transferring antibodies from the mother
- It **enhances the emotional connection** and attachment between the mother and the baby
- It may **boost the cognitive development** and intelligence of the baby
- It may **reduce the risk of obesity and diabetes** in later life for the baby
- It may **lower the chances of developing breast cancer and ovarian cancer** for the mother



Sources: World Breastfeeding Week 2023.
www.who.int/campaigns/world-breastfeeding-week/2023.

Joint Statement by UNICEF Executive Director and WHO Director-General on the Occasion of World Breastfeeding Week, 1 Aug. 2023, www.who.int/news/item/01-08-2023-joint-statement-by-unicef-executive-director-catherine-russell-and-who-director-general-dr-tedros-adhanom-ghebreyesus-on-the-occasion-of-world-breastfeeding-week

Breast milk is vital for the health of babies, especially in the first months of their lives. Therefore, everyone has a role to play in **supporting mothers who breastfeed their children.** This includes family members, community members, national authorities and global partners. They should all work together to create a conducive environment for breastfeeding and to protect mothers from any challenges or barriers that may affect their ability to breastfeed.