

**University Health Care Center**

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SUNY Upstate Medical University

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750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

Health Connections 315-464-8668 • 800-464-8668

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## *Information for You from Your Health Care Team*

### **BREAST MILK: SO MUCH MORE THAN NUTRITIOUS**

#### **Did you know that mother's milk is made perfect for your baby?**

Breast milk contains all the water and nutrients necessary to feed your baby. It is the only food needed for the first six months of life for most full term, healthy babies. Each mother's milk is well suited to meet the needs of her own baby. The more your baby nurses, the more milk you will make to satisfy his/her appetite.

#### **Did you know that breastfeeding promotes healthier and smarter babies?**

Infants who are breastfed are less likely to develop a number of infections that are common in infancy. Breast milk contains antibodies that help protect infants from developing certain illnesses. Breastfed infants are less likely to develop asthma, allergies and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). They are also more likely to have increased IQ scores and better brain development.

#### **Did you know that breastfeeding is good for a mother's health?**

Mothers who breastfeed their infants have less bleeding of the uterus after delivery. Studies show that these mothers also have longer time periods between future pregnancies. Some breastfeeding mothers have a quicker return to their pre-pregnancy weight. Mothers who breastfeed have fewer cancers of the breast, uterus and ovary. There is also a lower chance of osteoporosis, which is a bone disease that causes fractured bones.

#### **Did you know that breastfeeding is good for the entire family?**

Families of an infant who is breastfeeding benefit because of the money they save. Parents spend less time absent from work because their breastfed infant is healthier and has fewer sick visits to the doctor's office. A lot of money is also saved by not having to buy formula.

#### **Did you know that breastfeeding is a skill that gets better with practice?**

Most mothers who breastfeed for the first time need help getting the baby to suckle at the breast properly. Breastfeeding is a learning process for both mother and child. The more you nurse your child, the better you both become at it. During your hospital stay, after your baby is born, ask one of the medical providers to help you with breastfeeding your baby. Don't be shy, ask as many questions as you want.

#### **Do you have more questions about breastfeeding and breast milk?**

It helps to learn about breastfeeding while you are pregnant by reading, taking a breastfeeding class or joining a breastfeeding support group. Breastfed babies should visit their health care provider within 2-3 days after going home from the hospital. Many of your questions can be answered at that time. You can also call your health care provider's office at any time before your first visit. Here is a list of other helpful contacts:

Syracuse Healthy Start.....	464-5708
Family Ties Network, Inc.....	424-0009
Upstate Medical University Breastfeeding and Childbirth Classes.....	464-2169
St. Joseph’s Hospital and Health Care Center Childbirth Classes.....	448-5515
Crouse Hospital “First Steps” Classes and Childbirth Education Classes.....	472-2464
Onondaga County Health Department.....	435-2000
W.I.C. Program.....	800-522-5006
La Leche League.....	<a href="http://www.lalecheleague.org">www.lalecheleague.org</a> or 428-9022
World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action.....	<a href="http://www.waba.org.br">www.waba.org.br</a>
International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA).....	<a href="http://www.ilca.org">www.ilca.org</a>

Denise C. Woodall-Ruff, MD, is a practicing pediatrician and an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at SUNY Upstate Medical University.