

BREASTFEEDING

Breast milk benefits the health, growth, immunity, and development of infants, and mothers who breastfeed may have a reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes and breast and ovarian cancer.⁶⁶ Among infants born in 2007, 75.0 percent were reported to have ever been breastfed, representing a significant increase over the 68.3 percent of infants ever breastfed in 1999. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed—without supplemental solids or liquids—for the first 6 months of life;⁶⁷ however, only 43.0 percent of infants born in 2007 were breastfed at 6 months, and only 13.3 percent were exclusively breastfed through 6 months.

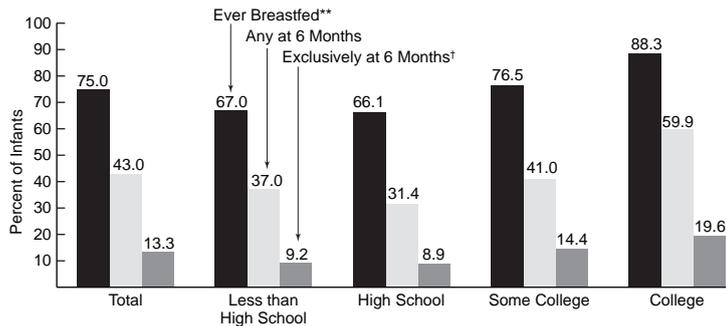
Breastfeeding practices vary considerably by a number of factors, including maternal race and ethnicity, education, age, and income. With respect to education, infants born to mothers with a college education were most likely to have ever been breastfed (88.3 percent) and to continue to be breastfed, while only about two-thirds of infants born to mothers with a high school degree or less were breastfed. With respect to race and ethnicity, Asian infants were most likely to ever be breastfed (86.4 percent) while non-Hispanic Black infants were the least likely to ever be breastfed (58.1 percent). Infants born to older mothers and those with higher household incomes were also more likely to be breastfed (data not shown). These sociodemographic

patterns persist with regard to the duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding.

Maternal employment can also affect whether and for how long an infant is breastfed; mothers working full-time are less likely to breastfeed at 6 months than those working part-time or not at all.⁶⁸ In 2009, half of all mothers with children under 1 year of age were employed, and two-thirds of those mothers were employed full-time (data not shown).⁶⁹ The Affordable Care Act, signed into law on March 23, 2010, helps to support breastfeeding among working women by requiring break time and a private, sanitary place for nursing mothers to express breast milk during the workday.⁷⁰

Infants* Who Are Breastfed, by Maternal Education and Duration, 2007

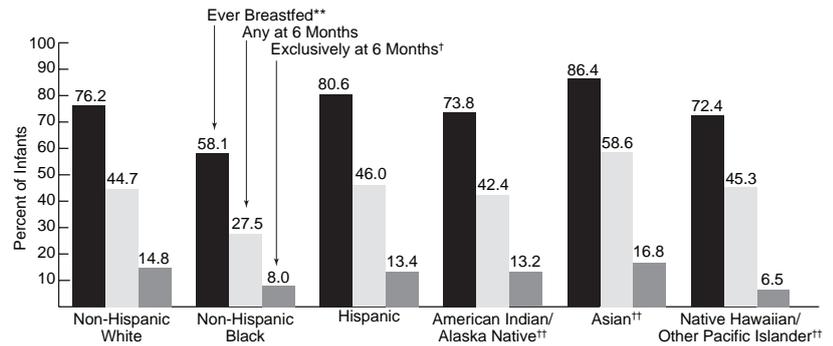
Source II.23: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey



*Includes only infants born in 2007; data are provisional. **Reported that child was ever breastfed or fed human breast milk. †Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as only human breast milk—no solids, water, or other liquids.

Infants* Who Are Breastfed, by Race/Ethnicity and Duration, 2007

Source II.23: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey



*Includes only infants born in 2007; data are provisional. **Reported that child was ever breastfed or fed human breast milk. †Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as only human breast milk—no solids, water, or other liquids. ††Includes Hispanics.