

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding has been shown to promote the health and development of infants, including their immunity to disease. It also confers a number of maternal benefits, such as a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers.¹ The American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Breastfeeding recommends exclusive breastfeeding—with no supplemental food or liquids—through the first 6 months of life, and continued supplemental breastfeeding through at least the first year.²

Breastfeeding practices vary considerably by a number of factors including maternal age, maternal education, household income, and race/ethnicity. In 2007, the parents of 75.5 percent of children from birth to 5 years of age reported that

the child had ever been breastfed or fed breast milk. While this represents a substantial increase in breastfeeding initiation over the past 25 years, the overall prevalence of any breastfeeding for 6 months and the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months remain below national objectives.³ Parents of 45.0 percent of children aged 6 months to 5 years reported that the child was breastfed for 6 months. Exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months was reported for 12.4 percent of children aged 6 months to 5 years.

Children born to mothers aged 30 years or older are the most likely to be breastfed (79.8 percent), while children born to mothers aged 20 years or younger are the least likely (58.5 percent). A similar trend exists for exclusive breast-

feeding; 14.1 percent of children born to mothers aged 30 years or older are exclusively breastfed for 6 months compared to 4.6 percent of children born to mothers aged 20 years or younger. Mothers with more than a high school education are more likely to both initiate breastfeeding and to breastfeed for 6 months exclusively than those with less than a high school education.

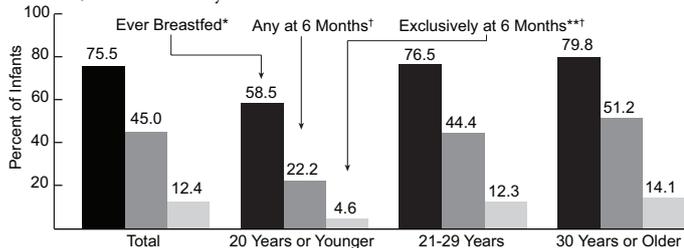
1 Ip S, Chung M, Raman G, Chew P, Magula N, DeVine D, et al. *Breastfeeding and maternal and infant health outcomes in developed countries*. Evid Rep Technol Assess (Full Rep). 2007(153):1-186.

2 Gartner LM, Morton J, Lawrence RA, Naylor AJ, O'Hare D, Schanler RJ, et al. *Breastfeeding and the use of human milk*. Pediatrics. 2005;115(2):496-506.

3 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2020*. Available at: www.healthypeople.gov. Accessed March 2011.

Breastfeeding Among Children Aged 0-5 Years, by Maternal Age and Duration, 2007

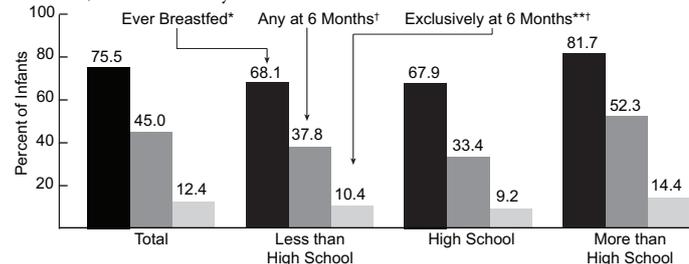
Source (II.2): Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Survey of Children's Health



*Ever fed breast milk. **Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as only human breastmilk—no solids, water, or other liquids. †Data is for infants aged 6 months to 5 years. Those less than 6 months of age were excluded.

Breastfeeding Among Children Aged 0-5 Years, by Maternal Education and Duration, 2007

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