

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding has been shown to promote the health and development of infants, as well as their immunity to disease. It also confers a number of maternal benefits, such as a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers.¹⁹ 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.²⁰

Breastfeeding practices vary considerably by a number of factors including maternal age, maternal education, household income, and

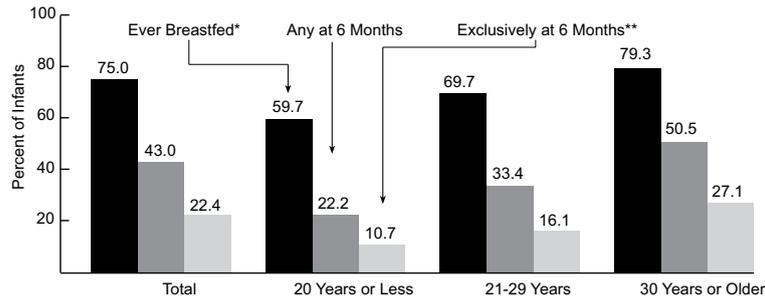
race/ethnicity.²¹ Among infants born in 2007, 75.0 percent were breastfed or fed breastmilk at least once. While this represents a substantial increase in breastfeeding initiation over the past 25 years, the overall prevalence of any breastfeeding for 6 months and the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months remain below national objectives.²² Less than half (43.0 percent) of infants born in 2007 were breastfed for 6 months and only 22.4 percent were exclusively breastfed.

Children born to mothers aged 30 years or older were the most likely to have been breastfed

(79.3 percent), while children born to mothers aged 20 years or younger were the least likely to (59.7 percent). A similar pattern exists for exclusive breastfeeding, as 27.1 percent of children born to mothers aged 30 years or older were exclusively breastfed for 6 months compared to 10.7 percent of children born to mothers aged 20 years or less. Increased maternal education is also associated with successful breastfeeding practices. Mothers who had graduated from college were more likely to both initiate breastfeeding and to breastfeed for 6 months exclusively than those with less education.

Breastfeeding Among Children Born in 2007, by Maternal Age and Duration

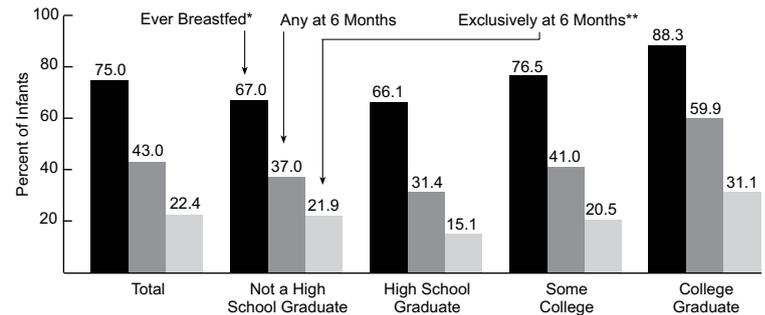
Source (II.4): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey



*Reported that child was ever breastfed or fed human breastmilk. **Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as only human breastmilk—no solids, water, or other liquids.

Breastfeeding Among Children Born in 2007, by Maternal Education and Duration

Source (II.4): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey



*Reported that child was ever breastfed or fed human breastmilk. **Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as only human breastmilk—no solids, water, or other liquids.