

CDC'S WORK TO SUPPORT & PROMOTE BREASTFEEDING IN HOSPITALS, WORKSITES, & COMMUNITIES

THE PROBLEM

1 IN 4

Only 1 in 4 infants is exclusively breastfed as recommended by the time they are 6 months old.

Low rates of breastfeeding add more than **\$3 billion** a year to medical costs for the mother and child in the United States.



Three quarters (76%) of Black infants are ever breastfed, which is below the national average of 84%.



BREASTFEEDING IS AN INVESTMENT IN HEALTH, NOT JUST A LIFESTYLE DECISION

BENEFITS FOR INFANTS

Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma
- Obesity
- Type 1 diabetes
- Severe lower respiratory disease
- Acute otitis media (ear infections)
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Gastrointestinal infections (diarrhea/vomiting)
- Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) for preterm infants



BENEFITS FOR MOTHERS

Breastfeeding can help lower a mother's risk of:

- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Ovarian cancer
- Breast cancer



Breastfeeding provides unmatched health benefits for babies and mothers. It is the clinical gold standard for infant feeding and nutrition, with breast milk uniquely tailored to meet the health needs of a growing baby. We must do more to create supportive and safe environments for mothers who choose to breastfeed.

Dr. Ruth Petersen, Director of CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity

MOTHERS NEED SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THEIR BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

60% of mothers stop breastfeeding sooner than they planned.



Certain factors make the difference in whether and how long babies are breastfed:

- Hospital practices
- Education and encouragement
- Policies or supports in the workplace
- Access to community supports

CDC IS INCREASING BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS ACROSS THE NATION



We collect data to learn how best to improve breastfeeding rates in the United States by:

- Tracking how long infants are breastfed.
- Creating reports that show how well states and hospitals support breastfeeding mothers.



We promote best practices in health care settings by:

- Supporting the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, a global standard to promote breastfeeding in hospitals.
- Encouraging obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses to educate new moms about breastfeeding.

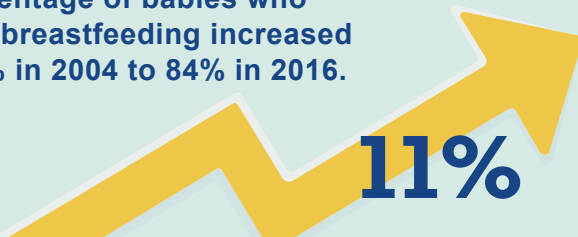


We support mothers at work and in their communities by:

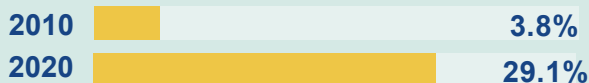
- Partnering with states to help employers support breastfeeding mothers with places to pump and store breast milk, flexible work hours, and maternity leave benefits.
- Promoting access to community supports like peer counseling and supplemental nutrition programs.

WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The percentage of babies who start out breastfeeding increased from 73% in 2004 to 84% in 2016.



In the United States, the percentage of births in hospitals with recommended maternity care practices that support breastfeeding increased from 3.8% in 2010 to 29.1% in 2020.



“Given the importance of breastfeeding on the health of mothers and children, it is critical that we take action to support breastfeeding. Women who choose to breastfeed face numerous barriers—only through the support of family, communities, clinicians, healthcare systems, and employers will we be able to make breastfeeding the easy choice.”

Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH
U.S. Surgeon General

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao
www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/about-breastfeeding