

Breastfeeding:  
Foundation  
*of* Life!

August:  
National  
Breastfeeding  
Month

# Breastfeeding Sets a Solid Foundation for a Healthy Life

The foundation of a home is often underappreciated. When you buy your first home, no one comes over to admire the foundation. They want to see the new paint colors, the kitchen cabinets, or admire the open layout. But we all know that it is critically important to have a structurally sound foundation. One could easily argue it is the most important part of a home. A foundation must be strong enough to support the load of the entire building and withstand everything mother nature throws at it; tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes. Often times after these disasters, the foundation is the only thing remaining.

This year's National Breastfeeding Month (NBM) theme focuses on the significance of breastfeeding with the theme: Foundation of Life! It is a beautiful theme highlighting the importance of the most precious gift a mother can give her child. Breastfeeding has countless benefits for baby from lower incidences of ear infection to reduced chances of obesity and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Turn to page 4 to get ideas to help you engage clients during NBM.

Researchers are learning more about the benefits of breastfeeding for mom and baby. A 30-year study just confirmed how breastfeeding could reduce the chances of

a disease that cripples many Americans' health. You can read about it on page 12.

It is easy sometimes to get wrapped up in work, but August is a time to celebrate. Let's celebrate your efforts supporting families on their breastfeeding journey. Let's celebrate how your efforts to help more Texas mothers breastfeed is changing minds and saving lives. Even one new mom achieving her personal breastfeeding goal is a cause for celebration. It's not only National Breastfeeding Month, but by the end of August, we will complete TXIN rollout state-wide! So give your team a high five, and keep up the good work.



From the desk of Edgar Curtis — Texas WIC Director



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# Breastfeeding: Foundation of Life!

by Faith Njoroge, MS,  
Breastfeeding Promotion Consultant

**B**reastfeeding is the cornerstone of a child's health, and a healthy child ensures a nation's sustained growth and development. Therefore, it is no wonder that the American Academy of Pediatrics and other health organizations endorse breastfeeding as the best way of feeding infants, and recommend continued breastfeeding for as long as mother and baby wish.



This August, Texas WIC will join a nationwide campaign to increase public awareness of breastfeeding and celebrate National Breastfeeding Month by adapting the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action's theme — *Breastfeeding: Foundation of Life!* The campaign focuses on breastfeeding as the foundation of lifelong good health for babies and mothers.

Studies confirm that the decision to not breastfeed a child has long-term negative effects on the health, nutrition and development of the child and on the mother's health. Possibly, no other health behavior can affect such diverse outcomes in mothers and children.

A mother's milk contains disease fighting substances that help build the baby's immunity. Several studies have shown that stomach viruses, lower respiratory illnesses, ear infections and meningitis occur less often in breastfed babies and are less severe when they do occur. Exclusive breastfeeding protects against diarrhea and respiratory infections such as pneumonia, and helps speed recovery during illness. Researchers looking at various factors associated with different diseases found that children and adults who were breastfed as infants are less likely to experience problems with chronic diseases including diabetes, obesity and asthma. Even minimal amounts of breastfeeding are seen to provide protection against some diseases in later life. Longer periods of breastfeeding are associated with a 26 percent reduced risk of becoming overweight or obese. The longer a baby is breastfed the greater the protective effect.

The 2016 Lancet Breastfeeding Series review shows remarkable evidence on the health and economic benefits of breastfeeding. There is strong evidence that breastfeeding is consistently associated with higher performance in intelligence tests in children and adolescents. Children who were

breastfed scored higher on intelligence tests, and were found to have increased school performance and income earning in adulthood, making for more robust local and national economies.

### **For Moms**

Breastfeeding is beneficial for mothers, too. It helps the uterus contract and reduces bleeding after delivery. Exclusive breastfeeding reduces a woman's risk of diabetes and ovarian cancer, and lowers rates of breast cancer.

It is estimated that increasing breastfeeding rates to the recommended one year and beyond for infants and young children could prevent an estimated 823,000 child deaths, and prevent an additional 20,000 deaths from breast cancer every year.

Here are some ideas for celebrating National Breastfeeding Month and Black Breastfeeding Week, the last week of August, in your clinic and community.

### **Proposed Activities**

Advertise and invite WIC families, their supporters and community to participate and learn about the importance of breastfeeding and how it impacts the health outcomes of mothers, babies and future generations.

- Host a community health fair. Have stations with different activities to highlight and promote the health benefits of breastfeeding for mothers, babies and generations to come. Incorporate educational games to engage participants as they learn about the benefits of breastfeeding.
- Have displays, posters and bulletin boards with breastfeeding materials and breastfeeding promotional giveaways in clinics during August. Play breastfeeding videos such as DV0001 - "The Mom Team presents: What to Expect From Your New Baby" DVD in the lobby/waiting room.
- Partner with your local community to provide breastfeeding information and activity booths at farmer's markets or county fairs. Have a breastfeeding shelter for moms at fairs.
- Hold a community breastfeeding support group. Discuss the myths and barriers that

surround breastfeeding and possible ways to overcome these barriers.

- Organize a walk to create awareness and promote breastfeeding culminating in a community event such as the Big Latch On.
- Conduct outreach to doctor's offices to promote breastfeeding. Share breastfeeding materials to promote WIC as a breastfeeding resource for follow-up and continuity of services.
- Conduct outreach activities targeting populations that are hardest hit by health inequities and disparities in your community. Use this platform to promote breastfeeding as a way of bridging the gap. Identify community organizations already working with these target populations, and develop relationships or partnerships with them.

Visit the 2018 National Breastfeeding Month webpage at <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/wichd/bf/wbm.shtm> for additional National Breastfeeding Month information and details on suggested activities and materials.

Visit [www.blackbreastfeedingweek.org](http://www.blackbreastfeedingweek.org) to get ideas for activities that can narrow disparities in client breastfeeding rates and honor your African-American and other WIC families during the last week of August.

### **Resources**

- Lancet Breastfeeding Series, published January 2016 <http://www.thelancet.com/series/breastfeeding>
- Surgeon General's Call to Action <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/breastfeeding/calltoactiontosupportbreastfeeding.pdf>
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- Young BE. Breastfeeding and Human Milk: Short and Long-Term Health Benefits to the Recipient Infant. *Early Nutrition and Long-Term Health.* 2017; pp.25-53 doi:10.1016/B978-0-08-100168-4.00002-1

# Texas WIC: Engaging Healthcare Providers in Breastfeeding Practice Change



by Veronica Hendrix, LVN, IBCLC, RLC  
Texas Ten Step Program Coordinator

**Y**ou know that saying, “If I had a dollar for every time I...” Seven years ago when I started at the state agency, that saying definitely applied to me. I often said, “I didn’t know WIC did that!” That sentiment is common among health care providers in Texas.

Providers often see breastfeeding as a patient's choice; a choice providers do not always understand they influence. This is where WIC as the community voice can help. Offering education about WIC services or clinic experiences can help build relationships with providers and thereby increase breastfeeding support. Engaging providers in the discussion so their practice meets the standard of breastfeeding care is not for the faint of heart. Fortunately, people like to work with those they see as a resource, and WIC has much to offer. Consider these ideas:

- Explore your health care community. Make a list of those you know and those you do not. Set an outreach goal to visit one from each list with a targeted message or personal introduction each month.
- Connect with a provider champion. Who in your community is already supporting breastfeeding? Pair up with them to present a best practice topic in a community setting.
- “Share seamlessly and steal shamelessly” was our motto from the recent Star Achiever Initiative. Create a lending library for information on best practices, share learning tools, books, articles and other resources or invite a local doctor to join your breastfeeding coalition.
- Lead by example. Talk with providers about what WIC does to support breastfeeding. Topics like tracking breastfeeding rates, personalized counseling on nutrition and breastfeeding, and how WIC helps create healthier moms and babies are great conversation starters. Or, share a client’s breastfeeding success story.

The state agency is actively working to develop the second phase of the Star Achiever Initiative. The focus will largely take place in the community setting, so while the state is planning, continue to build and strengthen relationships with providers in your community.

# Building Breastfeeding Bridges

by Michelle Poole, MS, RN, IBCLC  
Community Engagement Coordinator

*Michelle joined the state WIC team in January 2018 as the Community Engagement Coordinator in the Infant Feeding Branch. Michelle has more than five years of experience assisting breastfeeding mother/baby dyads and more than two years of experience developing, conducting and evaluating breastfeeding and infant-feeding trainings. Michelle will be designing and implementing new community-based programs to fill gaps in breastfeeding support services between hospital discharge and first postpartum WIC visit, to improve continuity of care, and to build a stronger lactation support infrastructure into communities of need. We are excited to have her as part of our team. – Tracy Erickson, Infant Feeding Branch Manager*



Michelle Poole

**M**y breastfeeding journey began with sleepless nights, anxiety and gallons of nipple cream. During the third week postpartum, I felt like a dish rag, and was starting to hallucinate from the lack of sleep. I started to think that breastfeeding was going to make me lose my mind, and as much as I didn't want to quit, my physical and mental health demanded a serious change.

Around that time, a visiting nurse came to check on me. She assessed the baby feeding situation and said, "Okay, here's what you're going to do," and gave me a bulleted list of breastfeeding tasks that seemed much more manageable than the feed/pump/supplement cycle which I had been prescribed. Following her plan over the course of the next few weeks, I was able to lose the bottles, lose the pump, lose the formula and lose the nipple shield. I was exclusively breastfeeding and it was wonderful.

I am so appreciative of that visiting nurse, because if not for her, I surely would have quit, and cursed breastfeeding for the rest of my days. She created a bridge for me that lead from horrible, frustrating and painful breastfeeding to wonderful, peaceful, natural breastfeeding and put me on a "breastfeeding helper" path that would ultimately lead to my position as WIC's Community Engagement Coordinator.

After breastfeeding for about a year, I decided to start building breastfeeding bridges for other

struggling moms and became a volunteer breastfeeding counselor. I loved it so much that I pursued my RN and IBCLC licenses and started working as a hospital-based lactation consultant. My master's degree in counseling allowed me to easily tune in to a new mother's state of mental health, and I became an advocate for breastfeeding moms who were feeling like I had — hopeless, helpless and out of mental energy. I learned all I could about infant formula so I could be a source of information if a mother found herself needing or choosing to supplement. I made sure all the moms I counseled felt supported and included, regardless of how they ended up feeding their babies.

As the Community Engagement Coordinator for WIC, I want to spread the knowledge that breastmilk is the ideal food for a baby, and with a social network of help and support, it is possible for a mother to reach her breastfeeding goals. I want mothers who feel underserved, ignored or looked down upon to feel that they have a voice in their communities. My work should result in moms becoming informed, engaged and empowered through the support of their social networks. Creating spaces where pregnant women and new moms can find reliable information, support, encouragement and non-judgmental breastfeeding help will be a wonderful way to spend my working days, and I am so excited to join the WIC team.



## Get to Know Our Lactation Support Centers

by Michelle Poole, MS, RN, IBCLC  
Community Engagement Coordinator

**P**regnant women and new mothers who are enrolled in WIC have access to many forms of breastfeeding support. Our wonderful WIC breastfeeding peer counselors, trained breastfeeding educators, our 24/7 Texas Lactation Support Hotline and Breastmilkcounts.com can all assist mothers in reaching their breastfeeding goals.

However, for some moms, the first few weeks of breastfeeding can be more difficult than they imagined, and the interventions for normal breastfeeding challenges prove insufficient. Fortunately, WIC offers a higher level of care that provides in-person and remote breastfeed-

ing support from IBCLC/RNs, at four lactation support centers located in Dallas, Houston, McAllen and Austin. What sets these centers apart from WIC local clinics (who often have an IBCLC on staff) is that they serve WIC moms as well as any mom in the community who needs breastfeeding assistance, free of charge, thanks to expansion funding from the Texas Department of State Health Services' Maternal & Child Health Program.

The cost structure is a true benefit to new mothers, considering that an appointment with an IBCLC can cost up to \$250 for one visit, and often several visits are required to resolve



breastfeeding problems. So while the lactation support center IBCLCs are saving breastfeeding relationships, the mothers are saving hundreds — if not thousands — of dollars.

“Well that’s great,” you say to yourself, “but Texas is a big state, and so really, how much help can four centers provide?” The Lactation Foundation teleconsulting service, available through The Lactation Foundation in Houston, enables WIC-enrolled mothers across the entire state to receive high-level lactation support. When local agency breastfeeding counselors identify a mother with a breastfeeding problem that is beyond their scope of practice, the teleconsulting system allows them to bring an IBCLC into that mom’s circle of care. The local breastfeeding counselor stays with the mother while connecting via webcam to an IBCLC in Houston. In this way, the IBCLC can take the lead in a higher-level breastfeeding assessment, and work with the peer counselor to resolve the problem. Through this innovative service, mothers who live in underserved areas of Texas can get the breastfeeding help they need.

In addition to providing breastfeeding assistance, the lactation support centers also work with their local medical communities to ensure the overall health of new moms and their babies. Mom’s Place, the lactation support center in Austin, identified a mother of a 5-day-old baby in need of urgent medical attention when she visited for engorgement and sore nipples. The RN/IBCLC who saw her noticed that her feet and ankles were very swollen. Upon further assessment, it came to light that the mother also had a headache, vision changes and a blood pressure of

168/110. Mom’s Place sent her directly to the ER where she was admitted for preeclampsia.

What a close call! Postpartum mothers are often not seen until at least two weeks after delivery. In this case, the mother had no health problems during pregnancy, labor or delivery, so there were no red flags to keep her in the hospital or have her return to her OB after discharge. In a way, it was fortunate this mother was having breastfeeding issues, otherwise she would not have been seen at Mom’s Place, which could have severely compromised her health outcome.

The two other lactation support centers are helping their local communities in special ways as well. The Lactation Care Center in Dallas is working to educate doctors and healthcare providers about how hospital practices impact breastfeeding outcomes, in a manner supporting Texas Ten Step and the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. In McAllen, the Lactation Care Center of Rio Grande Valley has piloted a program providing free monthly prenatal breastfeeding and newborn care classes to the larger community, in both English and Spanish.

All four centers are making strides to improve the health and well-being of Texas mothers. Many moms who struggle with breastfeeding get what free help they can, but when the time comes to see an IBCLC, they just can’t afford it, and often say farewell to their breastfeeding goals. With the lactation support centers to help, this need not happen! So the next time you hear of a mom — any mom who is struggling with breastfeeding — let her know that WIC offers free high-level breastfeeding support through their lactation support centers, and ask them to reach out.

## Texas Lactation Support Hotline: 1-855-550-MOMS

### Lactation Support Centers:

<b>Austin</b>	Mom’s Place	800-514-6667	<a href="http://momsplace.org">momsplace.org</a>
<b>Houston</b>	The Lactation Foundation	713-839-0527	<a href="http://lactationfoundation.org">lactationfoundation.org</a>
<b>Dallas</b>	Lactation Care Center	855-550-6667	<a href="http://lactationcarecenterdallas.com">lactationcarecenterdallas.com</a>
<b>Rio Grande Valley</b>	Lactation Care Center	956-292-7711	<a href="https://www.hidalgocounty.us/1648/Lactation-Care-Center-RGV">https://www.hidalgocounty.us/1648/Lactation-Care-Center-RGV</a>

## Gut Health

The term “gut health” is being used more often these days in news articles and advertisements, but what does it really mean? The gut, or stomach, is composed of trillions of types of bacteria, and many provide health benefits. Factors such as the foods we eat, the amount of stress in our lives, and how much sleep we get each night play a huge role in the health of our microbiome or gut bacteria. An imbalance within the gut will impair the gastrointestinal (GI) barrier and increase the risk of developing health issues. Our GI tract is responsible for multiple jobs like digesting and absorbing our food, and housing our microbiota. How do we keep our guts in tip-top shape? The answer is simple. Prebiotics and probiotics are a must in sustaining a healthy gut environment, and are equally essential in nourishing our gut flora.

***Fun Fact: The weight of the bacteria in our gut is about 2-3 pounds.***

The term probiotic is derived from the Latin word “pro” which means “for” and the Greek word “biotic” meaning “bios” or “life.” Probiotics are live microorganisms that line the digestive tract and keep our digestive system healthy. Probiotics prevent the growth of harmful bacteria that enter our body, and help maintain a desirable environment.

Prebiotics are defined as a non-digestible food ingredient, also known as dietary fiber, that benefits the gut flora by stimulating growth and activity to create a healthier environment. Prebiotics work together with probiotics to allow specific changes to take place in our microbiome. They play a fundamental role in feeding the probiotics to help colonize and differentiate bacteria, and increase the presence of good bacteria like Lactobacilli and Bifidobacterium. Yet another reason to load up on high fiber fruits and vegetables!

***Fun Fact: About 80% of our immune system lives within our GI tract.***

Research has suggested that healthy gut bacteria can:

- Improve digestive functions
- Reduce diarrhea associated with antibiotic therapy
- Help reduce the risk of certain acute common infectious diseases
- Enhance immune function

## Probiotic-Rich Foods

Certain foods like yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, kimchi, tempeh, kombucha and miso contain probiotics. Some of these foods maybe unfamiliar to you and that’s OK! Look for the terms “active cultures” or “contains live cultures” on the label when grocery shopping. Having a more plant-based diet and choosing nutrient-dense foods with high fiber can also be helpful in establishing gut flora.

Resources:

- Laurence. Probiotics help as 80% of Immune System in your GI Tract. Nutrition courses, Ireland in Dublin and Online. <https://instituteofhealthsciences.com/probiotics-help-immune-system-in-your-gi-tract/>. Published April 7, 2011. Accessed February 9, 2018.
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**Texas Seasonal Produce**

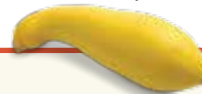
**Fruits:**

Apples, blueberries, cantaloupe, honeydew, peaches, pears, watermelon



**Vegetables:**

Green cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, green onions, herbs, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, sweet peppers, hot peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, turnips, zucchini



*recipe*

**Sweet Summertime Treat**

CONTRIBUTED BY STEPHANIE HOLLAND, RD, LD, WIC WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Summertime in Texas is no joke! With temperatures spiking in the 100s, the thought of turning on your oven (or going anywhere near it) is the last thing you want to do. Light and refreshing treats during this time of year are a MUST! Since kids are home for the summer, this is the perfect opportunity to get your whole gang involved in making a cool healthy treat to sweeten up your day.

**Berry Green Smoothie**

Adapted from Cookinglight.com

A tasty beverage full of prebiotics and probiotics!

*Combine the following into a blender:*

- 1 cup of frozen mixed berries
- ½ cup of baby spinach
- 4 tablespoons of water or milk
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1 medium frozen banana
- Adjust thickness of smoothie by adding more or less liquid.

**Nutritional Information:**

297 calories, 18 grams of protein, 50 grams of carbohydrate, 3.8 grams of fat, 8 grams of fiber



Share your wellness success stories for a chance to be spotlighted in Texas WIC News and inspire other WIC staff! Contact your State Wellness Coordinator, Stephanie Holland at [Stephanie.Holland1@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Stephanie.Holland1@hhsc.state.tx.us) or 512-341-4577.

## Breastfeeding Cuts

by Noemi Hernandez, MBA, RD, LD, IBCLC  
Breastfeeding Coordinator



**B**reastmilk has been named the “gold standard” when it comes to infant feeding. It is composed of many properties, one of which helps with the regulation of insulin. New studies have also indicated that the duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding reduces the mother and infant’s risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

A recently published observational 30-year Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) Study evaluated the progression to diabetes among young black and white women. It found that increasing lactation duration was strongly associated with the reduction of diabetes, despite pre-pregnancy biochemical measures, clinical and demographic risk factors, gestational diabetes, lifestyle behaviors and weight gain.

In addition, a quantitative analysis of research studies demonstrated a lower risk of type 2 diabetes later in life for infants who were breastfed compared to infants who were formula-fed. Furthermore, both insulin and glucose levels were lower in breastfed infants.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusively breastfeeding infants for the first six months and continued breastfeeding along with complementary foods until one year of age or longer. Yet, current rates for exclusive breastfeeding through six months are only 24.9 percent. Interestingly, regardless of medical recommendations and health benefits, some

# Type 2 Diabetes Risks

mothers do not even attempt to breastfeed or if they do start, they stop early.

## **Sustaining Breastfeeding in Diabetic Moms**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, low breastfeeding rates in the United States add more than \$3 billion a year to medical costs for the mother and child. Addressing the importance of breastfeeding with a pregnant mom with gestational diabetes or a family history of diabetes is a simple task that can help reduce the future development of type 2 diabetes.

As a public health entity, WIC is in a position to help our mothers continue breastfeeding through local community partnerships with hospitals, employers, peer and professional support. In addition, WIC local agencies employ or contract with registered dietitians (RDs), lactation consultants and breastfeeding peer counselors who can provide nutrition and lactation support. WIC RDs can help mothers with diabetes by providing education and menu planning using WIC foods to help lower their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

While breastfeeding education is part of the solution, strengthening the support system outside the WIC clinic is vital. Most mothers want to breastfeed but find it very difficult to continue in the real world. WIC staff can help coordinate a support team for a mother's

breastfeeding concerns and foster a strong follow-up referral system. Your local WIC agency can empower breastfeeding mothers through lactation education and support beyond the clinic walls and reduce their type 2 diabetes risk.

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## Triumphs Through Tragedy: Breastfeeding Through Harvey

*WIC staff are heroes. They may not respond to 911 calls but they are there for families in their time of need. Staff stepped up in countless ways during Hurricane Harvey. These success stories were so inspiring, we had to share them during National Breastfeeding Month. We salute all the clerks, peer counselors, IBCLCs and more who stood strong during the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.*

### LA 48

CONTRIBUTED BY: BY AMY WILLA, BS, IBCLC

I was feeling a little disappointed one day at work after Hurricane Harvey, as all four of my assessment appointments that day had turned into missed appointments. Many mothers missed or had to reschedule due to conflicts or lack of transportation. I was generally back to work as normal and luckily, everyone on my dedicated list of active lactation clients was safe and unhurt. Not unaffected, but unhurt. No one was unaffected by Harvey.

I'd used the extra time to work on administrative tasks, but I longed to be useful in the recovery efforts, or at least to have a mother and an infant make it to an appointment so that I could be helpful. And then Allison called. She was at the WIC unit set up in the NRG Arena to assist those who were displaced by the storm and living in the shelter.

"We have a mother here who is breastfeeding," she said. "She says baby is biting her and I was hoping you could talk to her and give her some suggestions."

I asked how old the baby was.

"Four days," said Allison. "We saw her first with her two little

boys, when she was pregnant. We served her and loaded benefits for her and the boys on a Harvey card, and the next time we saw her, she had delivered her baby. She is breastfeeding and pumping, but if baby is biting down, that usually means something unusual is going on, right?”

“Right. Is she open to my coming to the shelter for a home visit? I don’t have any clients right now.”

Allison paused to talk to the mother. “Yes, she would love for you to come. Home visit...” she paused again. “Well, I guess this is her home right now.”

Arriving at the NRG Arena, I found all units working hard to keep the setup organized, but the feeling of distress hung in the air. These people had lost everything. Water had taken it all. I was escorted to the area where two families with small children were living. It was a conference room with low pile carpeting, fluorescent lights, and cots and playpens arranged in the corners. Allison introduced me to the mother and her lovely children.

The two toddler boys played (and vied for my attention, as toddlers do) while I conducted a clinical lactation assessment for mother and infant. We talked about her concerns, chatted about baby behavior, feeding patterns, oral assessment, etc. Mom had delivered the baby via cesarean section and was attempting to feed her 4-day-old in a football position, sitting straight upright. I encouraged her to try a laid-back position, reclining on pillows. Once she felt comfortable, I helped her get the baby to latch on from a secure position on her chest. Immediately upon latching, the mom’s eyes lit up and she said, “I had no idea feeding her could feel this great.”

I asked her how the latch felt and made sure she wasn’t feeling any strain on her abdominal incision.

“I didn’t know I could relax while feeding her. I kept trying to sit up because that’s the way she got on in the hospital, but this is much better. Is she eating?”

We chatted about watching for wide gape, jaw

motion and satiety cues as her infant’s sweet little curls jiggled with each swallow. I showed her how to use a rolled up blanket for support, since the cots at the shelter did not come with breastfeeding pillows or arm rests of any kind. After baby wiggled comfortably out of her latch, we let her rest to burp on mom’s chest, and then completed the weighted feed. Mom was thrilled. She checked her comfort and helped baby over to the other breast. I knew that I could now give some attention to the boys, who were playing with Matchbox cars and cartoon character toys, which they kept handing to me throughout the visit. As I looked back, I was thrilled to see a comfortable mother, smiling down and kissing the forehead of her very competently-eating 4-day-old baby.

I don’t know how the family is doing now, but I know wherever they are in their recovery, the peace of that moment can never be taken away by any storm.

#### **LA 48**

CONTRIBUTED BY: AMELIA DAY, TECHNICAL SYSTEMS MANAGER

Working at the NRG Arena each day brought forth its own demands. I was hearing emotional stories one after another and observing the hardships and barriers facing each resident. I embraced the families’ needs not as “how WIC can help” but as “please allow WIC to help you at this time.” We served breastfeeding moms and pregnant women who delivered their babies while living in the NRG Arena.

WIC’s presence certainly made a positive difference – bringing smiles, hope, and even meeting the needs of purchasing foods that were more desirable and appetizing than what NRG Arena provided during their intermittent food breaks. Families were walking around eating fresh fruits, making peanut butter sandwiches, and yes, drinking 100% juices! The displaced residents were excited and telling other NRG residents that WIC was on site. They would say, “Go visit them, they are waiting to serve you.”

As a WIC staff member, what a great reward to serve and impact so many lives during an extremely sensitive and difficult time. Clients who arrived in tears left with smiles!

*(Continued on next page)*



**Triumphs Through Tragedy**  
*(Continued from page 15)*

**LA 26**

CONTRIBUTED BY: ZAHRA KOOPAEI, WIC DIRECTOR

We at LA 26 started operation on August 30, the Wednesday after the storm. We opened all sites, with the exception of two that were flooded or inaccessible. We operated out of three Walmart locations and the George R. Brown Convention Center for about a week. Our agency worked over Labor Day Weekend to help the community, especially those who had not needed WIC before the storm. We served 1,563 clients over Labor Day Weekend alone. In total, we were able to serve about 5,000 clients the first week. This was an amazing team effort and dedication on the part of our staff, especially those who were directly affected themselves, yet still showed up to help the community.

Additionally, one of our WIC sites was within a Multi-Service Center that also served as one of the three DSNAP locations the city. The congestion of applicants for DSNAP affected

parking and access to our WIC site. Fortunately, the state agency collaborated with the nearby Fiesta Mart and we were able to work out of the store. We served about 120 clients during our three-day operation at Fiesta Mart and we couldn't have done it without the support and patience of the help desk team.

We were so blessed to have had the assistance of Edgar Curtis and Amanda Hovis from the state agency, who personally delivered the equipment to Houston in order for us to operate at those special locations. Most importantly, we could not have started our operations as soon as we did after the hurricane without the support of our parent agency. They quickly assessed each site for damage, prepared us for operation and provided us with support staff from other programs within our department.

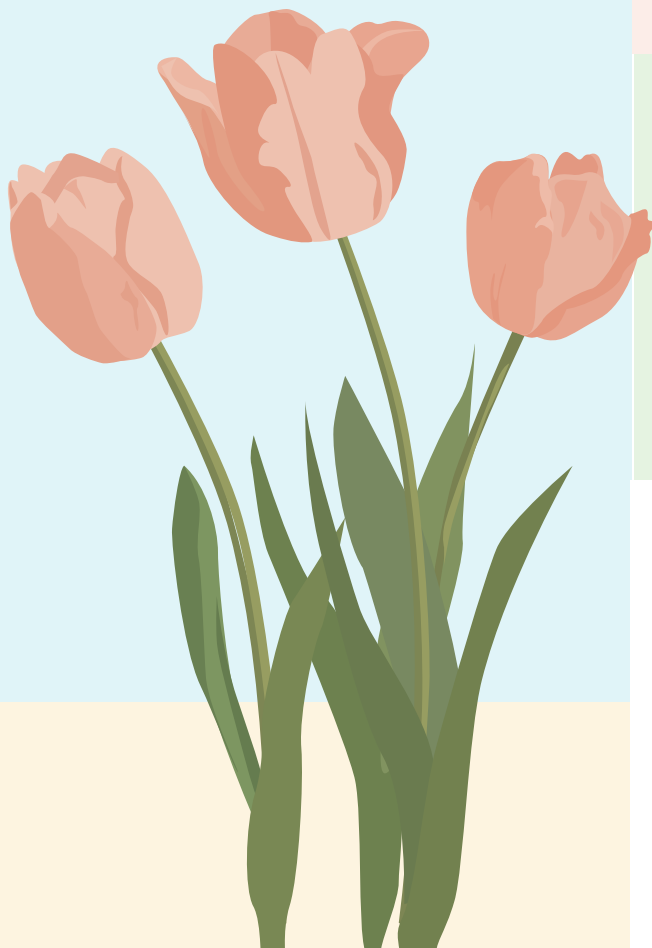




## The Awesome Benefits of Breastfeeding

by Eaton Wright, B.S., NUT  
Nutrition Expert

**E**aton Wright here to write about my favorite topic: the awesome benefits of breastfeeding. As the proud father of two totally breastfed kiddos and supportive partner of Ms. Always B. Wright, I can verify the benefits — healthy, happy, smart and super convenient! I'm so excited about breastfeeding that I can hardly wait to get on with the quiz, so here we go!



### Quiz:

1. True or False? Breastfed babies get sick less often.
2. True or False? Breastfeeding is great for babies, but it's terrific for moms, too.
3. True or False? Breastmilk changes over time.
4. True or False? Moms can still breastfeed while sick.
5. True or False? Children who are breastfed have a lower rate of certain illnesses as they grow up.

# Answers:

1. The answer is true. Breastfeeding lowers the risk of ear infections, diarrhea and stomach problems.
2. The answer is true. Breastfeeding helps lower the risk of breast cancer and ovarian cancer in moms. Breastfeeding may also help moms lose weight.
3. The answer is true. When you begin a breastfeeding session, the first milk your baby gets is called foremilk. It is thin and watery with a light blue color. After several minutes of nursing, your baby gets to the hind milk, which is thicker and fattier milk. Hind milk gives your baby the calories needed to grow.
4. The answer is true. Breastfeeding when you are sick can actually be good for your baby. When you get sick, your body starts fighting the illness by making antibodies, which then get passed on to your baby. By continuing to breastfeed, you are not just keeping up your milk supply, you are protecting your baby from getting sick in the future.
5. The answer is true. Breastfed babies have a lower risk of asthma, diabetes and childhood obesity as they grow up.

As always... Breastfeed your baby for a BIG baby brain!

And, don't forget Texas Law (Texas Health & Safety Code § 165.002) entitles a woman to breastfeed her baby in any Texas location in which the mother is authorized to be.

About the author: Eaton Wright is a certified NUT based in Austin, Texas.

Source: [www.womenshealth.gov/its-only-natural/](http://www.womenshealth.gov/its-only-natural/)



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