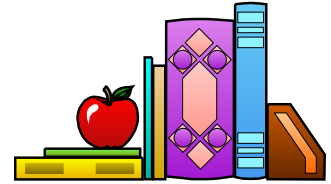


Will Breastfeeding Change My Lifestyle?



Having a baby changes your life. It is a wonderful experience, but definitely a change. Breastfeeding can fit right into your lifestyle despite all the advice you will receive, especially about what you can and cannot eat! People may say you need to follow a special diet or give up your favorite foods. Research tells us this simply isn't true.

Some common questions you may have:

What if I don't eat the right foods?

Every mother needs to eat a healthy diet. It is what is best for her. However, there are no special "rules" for breastfeeding mothers. You don't need to watch your diet or eat special foods. As a general rule, if you are eating enough to feel full, you are eating enough to produce good milk for your baby. But if you don't eat enough food, you may feel hungry or weak. A variety of foods are needed for good health. If there are days you don't eat "right", you will still make healthy milk.

What if I like spicy foods?

Spices are used throughout the world to flavor foods. Other cultures eat different types of foods and babies thrive on their mother's milk no matter what spices are used. Breastmilk can be flavored by foods, such as garlic, but studies have shown babies actually like the change in flavors. They enjoy a little variety in their diet too! And remember, the foods you ate during pregnancy flavored the amniotic fluid, so your baby is already used to the tastes of the foods you normally eat.

Are there certain foods I should avoid?

Most mothers can eat absolutely everything and their babies will have no reaction whatsoever. Occasionally a baby may be sensitive to something in your diet, but this is rare. Basically, you can eat anything you want. There is no list of foods you need to avoid, unless you notice a problem.

What if I like junk food?

Although no one should have a diet limited to or based on junk food, it will not ruin your milk or your baby's ability to receive good nutrition from your milk.

What about caffeine or soda pop?

Occasionally babies may get very active and not sleep well if their mother has a lot of caffeine during the day. Limiting your caffeine intake may be all that is needed to solve this. But you do not need to eliminate it.

What about smoking?

Everyone needs to quit smoking, but sometimes it is very difficult especially when you are starting a new job like parenting. If you can't quit, you can still breastfeed. All babies exposed to second hand smoke will have more ear and respiratory infections, whether they are breast or formula fed, but breastfed babies will have more resistance to these illnesses. You should never smoke in the same room as the baby. If you need to have a cigarette, smoke right after you breastfeed and away from the baby.

Is it okay to drink alcohol?

Alcohol does go into your milk, usually in small amounts. It is not considered harmful to the infant if the amount and duration are limited. However, if you use alcohol every day or in large amounts, you should not breastfeed. (Hale, Medications & Mothers' Milk, 2014)

Can I take medications?

Medications may pass into the breast milk, but most will not harm the baby. The type of medication, dosage and timing can be worked out with the help of your doctor. Be sure to check with your BABY'S doctor, peer counselor or IBCLC before taking any medications.

What if I get upset or nervous?

Many women are told their milk will spoil if they get upset or angry. This is not true. The hormones produced while nursing will help you to feel more relaxed. Even if you do get nervous, these feelings will not change your breast milk.

Remember most women can breastfeed their babies successfully, even those with less than ideal diets and those with health problems.

Breastfeeding is the healthiest for you and the healthiest food for your baby! Enjoy it and your baby!