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10 *More* Reasons to Breastfeed!

Breastfeeding has been around as long as humanity. Modern-day research methods allow us to measure the positive impact this simple and loving activity can have on maternal and infant health. Have you read these recent studies?

Child

1. **Reduced Risk of Adult Obesity**: A study of seniors in Finland found that people breastfed for 5-7 months had the lowest reported BMI at 60 years of age.
O'Tierney PF, Barker DJP, Osmond C, et al. Duration of Breastfeeding and Adiposity in Adult Life. Journal of Nutrition 139: 422-425, February, 2009.

2. **Lower Blood Pressure**: In a European study, on average, children who were breastfed had lower blood pressure than those who were not. The discrepancy was greater the longer a child was breastfed.
Lawlor DA, Riddoch CJ, Page AS, et al. Infant Feeding and components of the metabolic syndrome findings from Europe Youth Heart Study. Archives of Disease in Childhood 90:582-588, 2005

3. **Reduced Risk of Osteoporosis**: An Australian study demonstrated a link between breastfeeding in early life and bone mass in 8-year-old children born at term, particularly those breastfed for 3 months or longer.
Jones G, Riley M, and Dwyer T. Breastfeeding in Early Life and Bone Mass in Prepubertal Children. Osteoporosis International, 11: 146-152, February 2000.

4. **Improved Lung Functio**n: Breastfeeding for at least four months enhances lung volume in children. This change in volume helps to mediate the child's airflow.
Ogbuanu IU, Karmaus W, Arshad SH, et al. Effect of breastfeeding duration on lung function at age 10 years. Thorax 64: 62-66, 2009.

5. **Reduced Risk of SIDS**: A German study of 333 infants who died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and 998 age-matched controls, found that breastfeeding reduced the risk of SIDS by 50% at all ages throughout infancy.
Venemann, MM, Bajanowski, T, Brinkmann B, et al. Does Breastfeeding Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome? Pediatrics 123: 406-410, March 2009.

Mother

6. **Lower Blood Pressure**: Both systolic and diastolic blood pressures fall during a breastfeeding session and pre-breastfeeding blood pressure decreases during the first 6 months in a homelike environment.
Jonas EW, Nissen AB, et al. Breastfeeding Medicine 3(2): 103-109, June 1, 2008. As reported by liebertonline.com.

7. **Less Stress**: Breastfeeding is associated with decreased neuroendocrine response to stressors, improved moods, and enhanced physical and mental health.
Mezzacappa ES, Katkin ES, Breast-feeding is associated with reduced perceived stress and negative moods. Health Psychology 21: 187-193, 2002.

8. **Reduced Risk of Rheumatoid Arthriti**s: A Swedish study found that women who breastfed for 13 months and up were half as likely to get Rheumatoid Arthritis as those who never did.
Pikwer W, Bergstrom U, Nilsson J-A, et al. Breastfeeding but not use of oral contraceptives, is associated with a reduced risk of RA. Annals of Rheumatic Diseases 68: 526-530, 2009.

9. **Reduced Risk of Metabolic Syndrome**: A cluster of risk factors that make heart disease and diabetes more likely was rarer among women who reported breastfeeding their babies. The longer they breastfed during the first nine months, the less likely they were to be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome during a 20-yr study.
Gunderson EP, Lewis EC, Wei GS, et al. Lactation and Changes in Maternal Metabolic Risk Factors. Obstetrics and Gynecology 109: 729-738, March 2009.

10. **Reduced Risk of Cardiovascular Disease**: In postmenopausal women, increased duration of lactation has been linked with lower prevalence of hypertension and cardiovascular disease.
Scwarz EB, Ray RM, Seuebe AM, et al. Duration of Lactation and Risk Factors for Maternal Cardiovascular Disease. Obstetrics & Gynecology 113: 974-78, May 2009.

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