



Breastfeeding Basics: What Moms Should Know

What do Elle McPherson, Sarah Jessica Parker, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Uma Thurman and Faith Hill all have in common?

Each of these celebrity moms breastfed her baby!

And they're not alone. Today, more moms are breastfeeding than ever before. In fact, research shows that in 2002, 70% of American moms breastfed in the hospital, a steady increase from 1990's 51.5 percent. While the rate has improved significantly, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' targeted goal for breastfeeding at birth is 75%.

Breastfeeding Benefits for Mom:

- Breastfeeding burns calories. With a sensible diet, most nursing mothers can eat many small meals a day, and lose weight without dieting.
- When a woman nurses, her body releases special hormones that act as stress-reducers. These hormones can help lower heart rate, decrease anxiety and encourage "mothering" behaviors like nurturing.
- Breastfeeding may help protect women from osteoporosis later in life.
- Moms that breastfeed tend to have increased self-confidence and bonding with their baby.

Breastfeeding Benefits for Baby:

- Breast milk provides the appropriate balance of nutrients, including protein, sugar, fat and vitamins, in a form that is easily digestible for babies and some nutrients help aid in the development of the central nervous system.
- A mother passes the flavors of all the foods she eats to her baby through her breast milk, so that babies learn to appreciate varied flavors early on.
- Studies have shown there are significant health, nutritional and psychological benefits of breastfeeding for babies. For example, breast milk helps aid in babies' eye and brain development.

The Breast Pumping Experience:

- "Allowing someone else to feed" is the most frequently mentioned reason moms choose to pump (62%), although relieving engorgement (44%) and building milk supply (43%) are important as well.
- On average, moms who use breast pumps express milk three times a day, for a total of two hours.
- Moms are most likely to buy a breast pump for themselves, and they do so between the third trimester and the first month post-partum.
- In the U.S., 25% of moms use a manual pump as their primary breast pump, and 33% of moms use both an electric and a manual pump.
- Moms use manual breast pumps in a variety of locations. While most moms use manual breast pumps at home, 16% use it in the car, 9% use it at work, and 9% use it in a public restroom.

What Moms look for:

- One-third of moms feel that their needs are not being met with the manual breast pumps that are currently available on the market.
- Forty-five percent of moms say that the most important feature they look for in a breast pump is that it is easy to use. Moms also want a manual pump that works quickly (18%) and is convenient to use away from home (8%).
- Regardless of whether moms decide to switch between breast and bottle, or bottle feed all the time, they want whatever bottles, nipples and cups they use to feel as natural to their babies as possible.
- Nearly 60 percent of moms consider nipple shape and bottle shape when purchasing a bottle.