

The Benefits of

Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding is a natural way to nourish your baby. It benefits you, your baby, and the bond between. But it's YOUR decision whether to breastfeed.



Benefits for Your Baby

Breast milk provides your baby with many substances needed for healthy growth and development.

These include:

- ✓ Vitamins
- ✓ Minerals
- ✓ Proteins
- ✓ Fats
- ✓ Antibodies to strengthen your baby's immune system

Benefits for Your Baby

Breastfeeding provides additional health benefits for your baby:

- ❖ Lower risk for many types of infections, such as ear infections
- ❖ Fewer gastrointestinal illnesses (vomiting and diarrhea)
- ❖ Lower risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- ❖ Lower risk for certain conditions, like diabetes
- ❖ Lower risk for becoming obese later in infancy and during childhood.



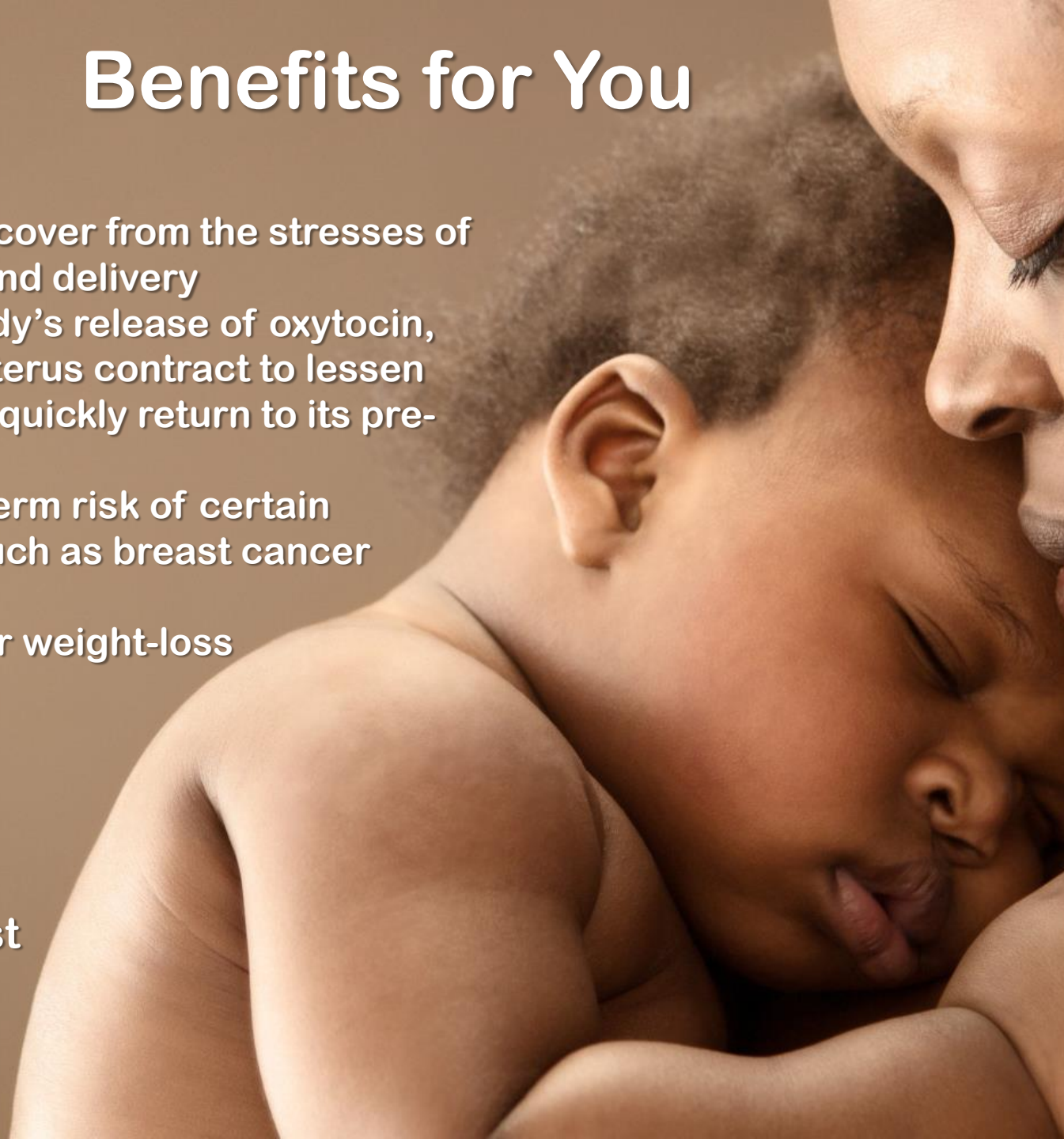
Baby formula will NOT help protect your baby from infections and other health problems.

Benefits for You

Breastfeeding...

- ❖ Helps your body recover from the stresses of pregnancy, labor, and delivery
- ❖ Stimulates your body's release of oxytocin, which helps your uterus contract to lessen bleeding and more quickly return to its pre-pregnant size
- ❖ Lowers your long-term risk of certain health problems, such as breast cancer and diabetes
- ❖ May allow for easier weight-loss

Also, compared to formula feeding, feeding at the breast is convenient. No need to prepare anything!





Breastfeeding, especially done skin-to-skin, strengthens the bond between you and your baby.

In addition to breastfeeding, swaddling, holding, and rooming-in provide more opportunities for bonding with your baby.

Benefits for You and Your Baby

Is it safe to breastfeed while I'm engaged in medically-assisted treatment (MAT)?

Yes! As long as you are not currently using drugs and have no other contraindications, breastfeeding is encouraged for mothers who are stable on their medical treatment.

In fact, only a minimal amount of medication is transferred into breast milk.



Benefits for Your Baby While Using MAT

- ✓ **Decrease severity of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) symptoms**
- ✓ **Lessen the need for medications**
- ✓ **Reduce the need for hospital stays**
- ✓ **Shorten the duration of hospital stays**
- ✓ **Provide bonding opportunities for you and your baby**



Breastfeeding is a personal choice. Your thoughts and feelings about it are an important part of the decision.



It's your decision.