



Jackson County Department of Public Health

Anna Lippard
Deputy Health Director
828-587-8225

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World Breastfeeding Week: August 1-7, 2023

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is recognized each year during August 1-7th. According to World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, “World Breastfeeding Week is a global campaign to raise awareness and galvanize action on themes related to breastfeeding.” Breastfeeding exceeds other ways of feeding infants. The antibodies your infant needs are passed to your baby through breastmilk within the first few hours after birth. It starts slow with the “first” milk, the thick yellowy colostrum, and within about 24 hours the white milk appears. The skin to skin contact immediately after birth promotes bonding and breastfeeding success. The benefits for baby include a better immune system, fewer allergies, better IQ, as well as better overall health. Breastfed infants are usually not picky eaters, as they get a taste of everything Mom eats by taking her breastmilk.

Mom also benefits from breastfeeding. She does not have to be concerned with making bottles, mixing formula or cleaning bottles. She and her infant can nurse virtually anywhere. The closeness she shares with her infant is indescribable and beautiful. There are also benefits such as her body returning to normal quicker, as it helps the uterus to return to normal size. She will utilize more calories because she is making milk and this can help her return to her pre-pregnancy weight. No special diet is required, but a mother will often become aware if she eats anything that notably made baby fussy. It is crucial for the breastfeeding mother to drink adequate water and to make sure she is nursing every 2 to 4 hours in the beginning. The baby’s stomach is very small, and it can only hold a small volume of breastmilk at each feeding. As the baby grows and the stomach can hold larger volumes, Mom can then go longer periods of time between feedings. Breastfeeding is a journey for Mom and baby.

The Jackson County Department of Public Health WIC Program is available to support new mothers and their babies during this journey. The WIC program supports breastfeeding as the “normal” way to feed babies. Those who participate in WIC receive education and support for breastfeeding. They have access Peer Counselor Services, and are potentially eligible to obtain a breast pump from WIC at no charge. For more information about the WIC program please call 828-587-8243.

Submitted by: Jennifer Luker
Breastfeeding Coordinator
Jackson County Department of Public Health



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