

## b. Make an informed decision about feeding your baby

### MODULE 8

Deciding how you are going to feed your baby is one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent. Making an informed decision means you have all of the information you need to help you decide what is best for your family.



To make an informed decision about how to feed your baby you should know:

- The benefits of breastfeeding for the baby, mother, family and the community
  - **Good for Baby:**
    - Provides the best food that is always fresh and ready
    - Helps to prevent constipation
    - May increase protection against illnesses such as childhood diabetes
    - Increases protection against ear, chest and stomach infections
    - Increases protection against allergies if there is a family history of allergies
    - May increase protection against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), also called crib death
    - Helps to promote proper jaw and teeth development
  - **Good for Mom:**
    - Promotes closeness and touching with baby
    - Helps the uterus to return to its normal size after birth
    - Helps to control bleeding after birth
    - Helps to protect against cancer of the breast and ovary
    - Helps to keep bones strong
    - Helps to use up the extra fat gained during pregnancy
    - Saves money; formula is expensive
    - Saves time; there is no need to prepare formula and bottles
    - Does not produce any garbage; there are no formula and bottle packages to throw out
- The health risks and costs of formula feeding
- Birth control compatible with breastfeeding ([ottawa.ca/en/breastfeeding-and-birth-control](http://ottawa.ca/en/breastfeeding-and-birth-control))
- Women have the right to be accommodated in the workplace during pregnancy and breastfeeding ([www.ohrc.on.ca/en/pregnancy-and-breastfeeding-brochure](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/pregnancy-and-breastfeeding-brochure))
- Once breastfeeding is stopped it is difficult to reverse the decision

Please visit [this link](http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/healthy_people/conte...) for more information on breastfeeding ([http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/healthy\\_people/conte...](http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/healthy_people/conte...))

### Risks of Formula Feeding

Babies are at increased risk of:

1. Ear, chest and urinary tract infections
2. Diarrhea
3. Inflammation of the stomach and intestines
4. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome(SIDS)
5. Obesity
6. Tooth decay
7. Some childhood cancers

Mothers are at increased risk of:

1. Postpartum bleeding
2. Cancer of breast, ovaries and uterus
3. Brittle bones

Others:

1. Formula does not change to meet baby's growing needs
2. Less convenient as extra time needed for sterilizing equipment and preparing formula
3. Potential for mistakes to be made during formula preparation
4. Potential for contamination during manufacturing and processing

If you have made an informed decision to feed your baby breast milk substitutes please contact your health care provider or your local Public Health office ([www.gnb.ca/publichealth](http://www.gnb.ca/publichealth) then click on Public Health Clinics).

Ask for information on sterilization, preparation and storage of breast milk substitutes.