What Is the Cost of Formula Feeding?

Formula feeding costs money. The dollars add up because you must buy extra formula as your baby grows, since WIC does not give you all the formula your baby will need. But the real cost of formula is the cost to your baby’s health … and the time you spend away from work or at the doctor when your baby is sick.

Compared to mother’s breast milk, formula is missing many things babies need to be strong, healthy, and smart.

See for yourself!
Breast milk has more of the good things babies need.

Breastfeeding Is Healthiest for Mom

• Breastfeeding helps mom’s uterus shrink to its pre-pregnancy size.
• It may help mom lose weight faster.
• It reduces her risk for breast and ovarian cancer, and osteoporosis (brittle bones) later in life.

Breastfeeding Saves Money

• It saves on formula, bottles, utilities, and medical bills.
• It reduces sick days used by working mothers.
• It’s good for the environment because there is less trash and plastic waste.

Breastfeeding: A Magical Bond of Love

Contact your local WIC office for more information.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
This project was funded by USDA/FNS WIBR-05-TX-1.
October 2008

Dads Play an Important Role
How Fathers Can Help

Some fathers think they may feel left out if their partner breastfeeds the new baby. But there are many ways you can help your partner care for your baby.

• Help with housework and cooking.
• Help limit the number of visitors and visiting time. New moms do need plenty of rest!
• Bathe and dress your baby. Change his diapers. Sing and talk to your baby. If you see the baby searching for mom’s breast, sucking his fist, or making sucking noises, take him to mom for a feeding. Cuddle and protect her while she feeds the baby.

It takes time for mom to learn how to breastfeed. If your partner is uncomfortable or has pain, it may be because the baby is not latching on correctly or because she is engorged. Many new mothers need help in the beginning. Contact a WIC breastfeeding counselor who can help her stay on track.

Take the baby to mom when she is ready to feed. Look at your baby’s tiny fist and remember that is about the same size as his or her stomach! The baby will need to nurse often, every 1½ to 3 hours, around the clock.

Mom’s early milk, called colostrum, is there from the beginning and is the only food the baby needs. Colostrum’s special role is to help your newborn stay healthy. It is filled with important vitamins, minerals, proteins, and immunities. Between the third and fifth days after birth, mom will start to feel fullness in her breasts, indicating her milk has come in.

Do not give your baby water or formula in the first weeks. Feeding the baby anything other than breast milk interferes with mom’s ability to produce enough milk.