

The Father's Participation and Involvement is Important

Many couples wonder how the father would be involved if they choose to breastfeed their baby. There are several parenting books written by experts recommending the father to bottle-feed the baby at least once a day to enhance the father and baby relationship (Parker, n.d.). In fact, there are many great ways that the father can do for his baby. In addition, research have shown that the father' attitudes and opinions of breastfeeding greatly influence the mother's decision to breastfeed the baby (Scott et al., 2001 as cited in Shaker, Scott, & Reid, 2004). Therefore, the father's involvement with breastfeeding is important.



For More Information:

Visit the La Leche League International
<http://www.llli.org>.

Contact your public health department



References

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Breastfeeding and Infant Care

Information for Fathers

By: [Roanne Pineda](#)

The Benefits of Breastfeeding

Benefits for Baby

- Nutritional (human milk has right amount of fatty acids, lactose, water, and amino acids for human digestion, brain development, and growth)
- Fewer illnesses because mom's antibodies are transferred via human milk
- Human milk is sterile which prevents digestive problems in babies
- Sucking at the breast promotes good jaw development
- Creates early attachment between mom and baby
- Feel sense of warmth and security (Williams, n.d.)

Benefits for Mom

- Decrease risk of postpartum bleeding
- Decrease risk of ovarian and breast cancer
- Earlier return to prepregnancy weight
- Lactation amenorrhea (Keister, Roberts, & Werner, 2008)

Benefits for Dad

- Can get more sleep at night (and everyone as well). (Henry, n.d.)
- Economical (saves money from buying formula and bottles) (Williams, n.d.)



Roles of Daddy

The Good Student

Dad can be the second ear and sort out the overwhelming breastfeeding information. He can help with the positioning of the baby and watch for improper latch.

Takes care of the Breastfeeding Mother

Bring something for mom to drink. Make sure she eats well and rests as she is the baby's food source. Dad can also take on more household chores.

The Cheerleader

Support mom and remind her that things will get better. Let her know that she is doing a great job.

Running Interference

Can let visitors know when mom and baby needs quiet time for feedings.

Squashes Criticism

Mom may be criticized by others. This is the time to step in and explain their reasons for choosing to breastfeed. Talking about the benefits of breastfeeding is a good place to start.

Bonding with baby

See next section for information on many ways dad can bond with baby.

(Flora, 2003)



Learn about baby

Such as they way baby want to be held and comforted, their likes and dislikes, and their cues. (Henry, n.d.)



Skin-to-skin

Offers the same benefits to baby as when mom provides skin-to-skin contact. Can be done by napping on dad's bare chest. (Parker, n.d.)



Explore the environment

Dad can take the baby in his arms and explore the pictures on the walls and the plants in the yard. (Parker, n.d.)



Bath time

Dad can bathe the baby or with the baby. This can also be a skin-to-skin activity. (Parker, n.d.)



Read to baby

Babies love to hear voices. Read the baby newspaper in the morning and books at night. (Parker, n.d.)



Burping

Dad's shoulders offers just the right amount of pressure to burp the baby and relieve the baby's discomfort. (Henry, n.d.)