

Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention

PEP Talk

Pinellas County Health Department • August 2007

World Breastfeeding Week is August 1-7

Best for Mom, Best for Baby

You may have heard that breastfeeding is the key to good health for mothers and babies, but do you know why?

There are many reasons. For starters, at birth your baby is immune to everything you are, but doesn't have a fully functioning immune system until six weeks. Your baby's immune system will be functioning, but not fully developed, at age six months. Breast milk helps protect your baby from allergies and other illnesses.

Breastfeeding is how babies are meant to be fed. Infant formulas (artificial baby milk) are usually made from cow's milk –meant for baby cows! There is no infant formula that can replace breastfeeding.

Best for Your Baby

Here are some benefits:

- Breastfeeding encourages the best brain growth and development in babies.
- Breastfed babies usually grow up to have higher IQ's as than infants who were not breastfed.
- Breastfed babies are less likely to die of crib-death (also called Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS).
- Breastfed babies have fewer illnesses and do not get as sick when illness does happen.
- Breastfeeding protects your baby against respiratory infections, ear infections, childhood diabetes and certain types of cancer.
- Breastfeeding helps your child's face develop correctly.
- Breastfed babies are less likely to have

dental cavities or crooked teeth.

- Breastfed babies are less likely to become overweight children.

Best for Mom

Breastfeeding is something special you can do for your baby and it will help you and your baby build a close and loving bond. The hormones from breastfeeding will help you feel more relaxed, loving and protective of your baby.

Another benefit of breastfeeding is that it can help you lose the weight you gained during pregnancy.

Breastfeeding is also important for your health. It reduces your risk of breast and ovarian cancer and

osteoporosis (weak bones).

If you want to know more about breastfeeding, call one of the Pinellas County Health Department WIC offices. The staff includes breastfeeding experts who can provide lots of information and can help moms-to-be or brand new mothers who are unsure about breastfeeding or need extra support. WIC also provides a way for you to get healthy food for you and your baby. Call today or tell a friend about WIC:

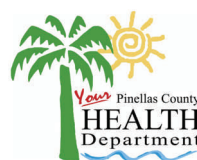
St. Petersburg - 824-6914

Pinellas Park - 547-7780

Largo - 588-4716

Clearwater - 298-2530

Tarpon Springs - 942-5457



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Those Pesky Mosquitoes...

Just one mosquito bite can transmit West Nile virus (WNV) or other diseases. When dealing with mosquito-borne diseases, prevention is your best bet. Fighting mosquito bites reduces your risk of getting WNV, along with other diseases that mosquitoes can carry.

Steps to reduce your risk of mosquito bites:



Avoid bites.

Use insect repellent on exposed skin when you go outdoors. Use an EPA-registered insect repellent such as those with DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Even a

short time being outdoors can be long enough to get a mosquito bite.

Proper clothing can help.

If you can, wear long sleeves, long pants and socks when you are outdoors. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spraying clothes with a mosquito repellent that has been approved by the EPA give extra protection. Do not apply mosquito repellents containing permethrin directly to skin. Do not spray repellent on the skin under your clothing

Mosquito-proof your home.

Install or repair screens. Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having well-fitting screens on both windows and doors. Offer to help neighbors whose screens might be in bad shape.

Clean up.

Mosquito breeding sites can be anywhere. See about organizing a neighborhood clean-up day to pick up containers from vacant lots and parks, and to encourage people to keep their yards free of standing water. Mosquitoes don't care about fences, so it's important to control breeding sites throughout your neighborhood.

Be aware of mosquito "prime time."

The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing during evening and

early morning –or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times.

Remember the Five D's.

Dusk and **D**awn: Remember that many mosquitoes are active between dusk and dawn. Limit your time outdoors during these hours.

Dress: Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants and socks sprayed with repellent while outdoors.

DEET: Use an insect repellent that contains DEET. Put it on exposed skin when you go outdoors.

Drain standing water. Don't give mosquitoes a place to breed.

Get rid of mosquito breeding sites:

Remember: Mosquitoes breed in standing water, so check your yard at least once a week.

- Clean out eaves and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill drainage holes in those used in playgrounds.
- Turn over or remove empty pots and buckets.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Check tarps on boats or equipment that may collect water.
- Store canoes and small boats upside-down.
- Replace water in birdbaths and animal feeding dishes at least three times a week.



- Change water in outdoor plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.

Do you have an older neighbor or family member? See if they need help checking their yard or installing or repairing screens.

Take steps now to prevent mosquitoes from breeding and protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites!



For more information about avoiding preventing mosquito bites and staying safe this summer, visit our **Summer Safety** website at www.PinellasHealth.com or visit www.cdc.gov