

[IMAGE]

More Breastfeeding Benefits

By Editorial Staff

You can't seem to go wrong when it comes to breastfeeding, with a growing body of research supporting the health benefits for both mother and child. The latest: Mothers who breastfeed are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes or suffer from high blood pressure, two major health risks worldwide.

Researchers reviewed previous studies examining the relationship between lactation and diabetes / high blood pressure. Among more than 200,000 mothers, those who breastfed for more than 12 months were 30 percent less likely to develop diabetes and 13 percent less likely to develop high blood pressure compared to mothers who nursed for a shorter length of time.

Quoted in Reuters Health News, senior study author Dr. Haitham Ahmed explained the potential reason why breastfeeding may exert a protective effect against these two common health woes: "[B]reastfeeding burns a lot of calories and helps reverse metabolic problems that can develop during pregnancy like higher cholesterol, more fats circulating in the blood, and a diminished ability to process sugars."

Writing in *JAMA Network Open*, which published the findings, researchers emphasize that breastfeeding may therefore be an easy, natural intervention to help new mothers reduce their risk of diabetes and hypertension. This is particularly significant because more than 30 million U.S. adults suffer from diabetes, three-quarters of whom also suffer from high blood pressure.

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