Benefits Of Breastfeeding

- Breastmilk is 87% pure water. If a baby is getting enough breastmilk, the baby is getting enough water.

- A baby who has 6 wet diapers a day and regular bowel movements, is getting enough breastmilk without using formula.

- If a mother’s work schedule prohibits her from breastfeeding, she should consider using an electric breast pump and supplies that may be obtained through the local WIC Program.

- The release of hormones while a mother is breastfeeding relieves stress and anxiety and is calming to both mother and baby.

- A mother can relactate (start making milk again) up to six months after birth by putting baby to the breast or pumping every two hours.

- Breastfed babies are less likely to become obese or develop asthma when they get older.

- Mothers who breastfeed are less likely to have breast and ovarian cancer later in life.

Infant Feeding During Emergencies

- In an Emergency, the Cleanest, Safest Food You Can Give Your Baby is Your Own Milk

Adapted from the White Ribbon Alliance: Women and Infants Service Package (WISP), Harris County Breastfeeding Coalition, Solano County Health and Social Services Department, American College of Nurse Midwives, the International Baby Food Action Network work (IBFAN), and American Academy of Pediatrics.

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January 2008
Protect Your Baby By Breastfeeding

- During an emergency such as an earthquake or other disaster, breastfeeding saves lives by:
  - Protecting babies from diseases and prevents exposure to unclean food and water
  - Reducing the risk of harm to babies from unsterilized feeding utensils
  - Eliminating the need for formula which requires scarce commodities such as clean water, fuel, and adequate storage
- Breastmilk helps babies fight diseases like:
  - Diarrhea
  - Ear Infections
  - Pneumonia
  - Cholera
  - Food Poisoning
  - Respiratory Illnesses
- Women can and do breastfeed under stress. Stress will not cause milk to go away. Babies lives are saved everyday by mothers who breastfeed them during war and natural disasters.
- Breastmilk is a “meal ready to eat”.
- It is the right temperature and helps to prevent hypothermia.
- During an emergency, even a baby over 6 months can survive only on breastmilk or small amounts of solid foods.

If You Cannot Get To A Hospital To Deliver Your Baby

The Following Supplies Should be Included in Your Emergency Plan

- Baby size bulb syringe (made of soft plastic, often called an ear syringe; should not be a nasal syringe as the plastic tip does not fit into a baby-sized nose)
- A bag of large-sized under pads with plastic backing to protect sheets from messy fluids
- Small bottle of isopropyl alcohol
- Package of large cotton balls
- Box of disposable plastic or latex gloves
- White shoe laces (to tie umbilical cord)
- Sharp scissors (to cut umbilical cord)
- Twelve large sanitary pads
- Chemical cold pack (the kind you squeeze to get it cold)
- Hot water bottle (to help keep baby warm)
- Six disposable diapers
- Pain pills such as Tylenol® or Advil®
- Small bar of antibacterial soap or liquid antibacterial hand sanitizer

Immediately After Birth

- Keep baby skin to skin
- Feed baby on demand (at least every 2-3 hours)
- If baby has difficulty latching, hand express and cup feed
- Mother should be given food and drink when available, but even without adequate food she CAN provide enough milk for her baby
- Mother should try to stay rested

You Need the Following Supplies

- Case of Diapers
- Baby Wipes
- Sealable Plastic Bags for Soiled Items
- Comfort Items (e.g., favorite blankets, pajamas, dolls, toys or music)
- If Child is over 6 months, non perishable baby food and/or table food

If You Are Breastfeeding During An Emergency

If Mother’s Own Milk Is Not Available

- Use another mother’s breastmilk
- Feed the baby using available safe ready-to-feed liquid formula
- Use cup for feeding rather than bottle (let the baby sip; do not pour down baby’s throat)