



BREASTMILK

EVERY OUNCE COUNTS

Breastmilk is the only infant food that protects against diseases and infections. Your milk acts as a natural immunization for your baby. Breastfed babies have fewer ear infections, respiratory problems, urinary infections, and digestive problems.

Other ways to protect your baby against infection:

- Immunize your baby. Use the CDC's Scheduler Tools to keep your baby on track, http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/Schedule/schedule_child.shtm.
- Get regular well-baby checkups from your baby's healthcare provider.
- If your baby goes to a childcare facility, visit the facility two or three times before leaving your baby there. Pick up the toys and touch different items in the center. Your breastmilk will build up antibodies to protect your baby from the germs you touch in the child-care center.
- Keep your baby away from secondhand smoke.

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Preparing Your Baby for Immunizations

- If possible, have your baby or child take a nap before taking him to the healthcare provider so he won't be fussy.
- Be pleasant and calm at the visit. Speak in a soothing voice.
- Take a favorite toy or blanket for your baby to hold. Hold, touch or stay close by.
- Studies show that children who breastfeed while getting their immunizations feel less pain. Ask your doctor if you can feed your baby while he is getting his shots.
- Expect your baby or child to be fussy after shots. Remember, all babies and children are different and they react differently to shots.
- Never threaten your child with shots. It makes him afraid of the doctor and the nurse.
- If you have a vaccination record for your baby, take it along so the healthcare provider can mark the shots given to her today. If not, ask the provider for one.