

Breastfeeding Mothers with Disabilities

There are so many decisions to make when you are expecting a baby.

Breastfeeding is one of the best choices you can make to protect the health of your baby.

Mothers can breastfeed despite physical ailment or disability.

Example:

- Multiple Sclerosis
- Myasthenia gravis
- Systemic Lupus
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Hearing / Visual Impairment
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

If you have questions and/or would like support, please reach out to your doctor, pediatrician, WIC or birthing hospital to get in contact with an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) or Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC).

It doesn't matter if you are a first time mom or a seasoned pro! Expecting a baby can be challenging and exciting all at the same time.

Breastfeeding is possible if you or your baby have a chronic medical condition and / or disability.

Support the lifelong health of your child... BREASTFEED!

Other Resources:

Breastfeeding a Baby with Down Syndrome - https://www.ndscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/CDSS_breastfeeding_brochure.pdf

Tongue and Lip Ties - <https://www.llli.org/breastfeeding-info/tongue-lip-ties/>

Cleft Lip, Cleft Palate and Breastfeeding - <https://abm.memberclicks.net/assets/DOCUMENTS/PROTOCOLS/17-cleft-lip-cleft-palate-protocol-english.pdf>

Breastfeeding with Cystic Fibrosis - <https://www.cff.org/Life-With-CF/Transitions/Family-Planning-and-Parenting-With-CF/Parenting-as-an-Adult-With-CF/Breastfeeding-With-CF/>

Sensory Disability - <http://www.mobimotherhood.org/breastfeeding-and-the-sensory-world-of-the-baby---part-i.html>

Tongue and Lip Ties - <https://www.llli.org/breastfeeding-info/tongue-lip-ties/>



Breastfeeding

Considerations for Mothers & Infants with Disabilities

Niagara County Department of Health
Division of Planning

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Lockport, New York 14094



Lactation Program:

716-439-7431

Benefits of Breastfeeding

- Helps protect babies with Down Syndrome from respiratory infections and bowel problems he or she may be prone to
- Better brain development and cognitive function for baby
- Lower risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Easily digestible and better for the health of babies with heart problems or cystic fibrosis, who may have trouble gaining weight
- Less irritating to the nasal passages of a baby with a cleft palate
- Lower rate of developing chronic medical conditions like diabetes, obesity, asthma and intestinal illness's throughout life



American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Recommends exclusively breast feeding infants for at least 6 months to ensure optimal immune function for life by giving them proper nutrition and antibodies to fight off diseases

Medications and Breastmilk:

- Most medications are compatible with breastfeeding
- If you are on any medications, please talk to your health care provider before starting to breastfeed

Overcoming Challenges

Mothers with disabilities and / or chronic illnesses should seek help for support with concerns about limitations and increased fatigue when breastfeeding.

Some easy tips that can help alleviate challenges,



- Proper nutrition
- Increased activity
- Stress reduction techniques
- Proper sleep hygiene (number of hours slept per night, sleeping area, non-disturbed)
- Adequate support for arms: nurse lying down, have help in lifting baby if necessary, rolled towel under the breast for added breast support
- Use of propping pillows
- Use of supplemental nursing systems