



Breastfeeding is a wonderful gift for both you and your baby.

Breastmilk is the only infant food that protects your baby against disease and infection. 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. Your baby's first immunization is at 1 month of age.
- Get regular well-baby checkups from your baby's pediatrician.
- 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.

Card #7

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Preparing Your Baby for Doctor's Visits



- If possible, have your baby or child take a nap before his appointment so he isn't 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.
- Breastfeeding may comfort your baby. Some studies show that children who breastfeed while getting their immunizations feel less pain. If your child is bottle-feeding, let him suck on a pacifier or your finger (if there are not teeth present) while he is getting shots.
- If shots make you nervous, ask a family member or friend to go with you to hold your baby while you offer comfort. Ask a friend to care for older siblings while you care for the baby who is being seen by the doctor or nurse.
- 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.