

Breastfeeding

The benefits of breastfeeding are well documented. Mothers milk is known to be a complete form of nutrition for infants and best for their development. Mothers benefit from breastfeeding, as well, in terms of reduced postpartum bleeding, earlier return to pre-pregnancy weight, reduced risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer, and reduced risk of osteoporosis.¹

The SPDS survey collects mothers' intent to breastfeed at the time of delivery and includes "plan to breastfeed only" and "plan on both breast and formula feed." In 2006, 70.0% of mothers had an intention to breastfeed. This is an increase from 65.8% in 2001.

Method of Feeding Newborns by County of Hospital for Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties for Births in 2006

Hospital County	Total	Breast Only	Formula Only	Both
Albany	4,605	2,520	1,358	727
Rensselaer	1,091	519	433	139
Schenectady	2,703	1,627	750	326
Total	8,399	4,666	2,541	1,192

Hospital County	Total	Breast Only	Formula Only	Both
Albany	100%	55%	29%	16%
Rensselaer	100%	48%	40%	13%
Schenectady	100%	60%	28%	12%
Total	100%	56%	30%	14%

Method of Feeding Newborns
by Mother's County of Residence
for Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties
for Births in 2006

Hospital County	Total	Breast Only	Formula Only	Both
Albany	2,951	1,654	882	415
Rensselaer	1,594	801	560	233
Schenectady	1,785	1,011	543	231
Total	6,330	3,466	1,985	879

Hospital County	Total	Breast Only	Formula Only	Both
Albany	100%	56%	30%	14%
Rensselaer	100%	50%	35%	15%
Schenectady	100%	57%	30%	13%
Total	100%	55%	31%	14%

Among 2005 PRAMS respondents, approximately 73% of mothers had initiated breastfeeding at or shortly after delivery.

Percentage of Mothers Initiated Breastfeeding After Delivery by Selected Characteristics, PRAMS, New York State Excluding New York City, 2000-2005
Table 17

Percentage of Mothers Initiated Breastfeeding After Delivery												
by Selected Characteristics, PRAMS, New York State Excluding New York City 2000-2005												
Maternal Characteristics	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
TOTAL	69.1	± 3.3	68.6	± 3.3	72.1	± 3.3	71.6	± 3.3	72.4	± 3.4	72.9	± 3.3
RACE												
white	67.5	± 3.6	67.9	± 3.5	71.9	± 3.5	72.3	± 3.5	69.6	± 3.9	70.4	± 3.7
black	73.5	± 10.7	65.7	± 12.1	68.3	± 11.7	60.4	± 12.2	77.6	± 11.1	70.5	± 12.5
other	95.6	± 6.8	87.1	± 12.7	89.7	± 12.6	82.9	± 14.4	91.9	± 6.5	91.4	± 5.7
AGE												
<20	80.4	± 9.8	53.8	± 12.8	58.7	± 15.8	51.0	± 15.1	70.4	± 13.5	60.8	± 15.4
20-24	67.6	± 8.2	61.0	± 8.5	72.9	± 7.9	67.8	± 8.2	68.7	± 9.0	70.2	± 8.1
25-34	66.5	± 4.5	70.9	± 4.3	72.5	± 4.3	75.5	± 4.2	71.0	± 4.7	76.3	± 4.2
>=35	72.1	± 7.1	75.5	± 6.6	74.4	± 6.9	72.4	± 6.9	79.8	± 6.4	70.8	± 7.1
Education												
0-11 years	71.5	± 9.5	56.4	± 10.1	59.0	± 11.2	58.3	± 10.2	69.8	± 10.1	67.3	± 9.4
12 years	55.3	± 6.4	57.9	± 6.5	63.7	± 6.6	64.2	± 7.0	61.2	± 7.4	59.4	± 7.8
>12 years	75.9	± 3.9	77.6	± 3.8	79.5	± 3.7	78.1	± 3.7	78.1	± 3.9	79.2	± 3.7
Marital Status												
Married	70.1	± 3.8	73.2	± 3.5	75.5	± 3.6	76.5	± 3.6	74.7	± 3.9	75.1	± 3.7
Other	66.8	± 6.6	55.9	± 7.3	62.2	± 7.4	59.9	± 6.9	67.4	± 6.8	68.1	± 6.4
Medicaid Status												
On Medicaid	71.3	± 6.5	62.2	± 6.9	66.7	± 6.9	62.0	± 6.7	71.8	± 6.0	68.4	± 5.8
Not on Medicaid	68.3	± 3.8	71.0	± 3.7	74.3	± 3.7	76.0	± 3.6	72.7	± 4.2	75.7	± 3.9

The *Healthy People 2010* targets for the proportion of mothers who breastfeed their babies are 75% in the early postpartum period; 50% at six months; and 25% at one year. The highest rates of breastfeeding are among college-educated women and women who are 35 years or older. Women who are under the age of 21 and those with low education levels have the lowest national rate of breastfeeding. This is troubling because this is the

group which is at the highest risk of poor health, development, and malnourishmentⁱⁱ. Data reflect that outreach efforts to those who did not initiate breastfeeding with prior births, such as mothers of a young age, those on Medicaid, etc. have been successful. More of these women are beginning to initiate breastfeeding.

As for most aspects of healthcare, education about breastfeeding for the women is very important. Fears, benefits, and health questions can all be addressed by a variety of community resources.

i HP2010, Objective 16-19

ii HP2010