

Breastfeeding Reduces the Risk of Breast Cancer



Your patients may not know this.

A recent study found less than 17% of mothers received information from healthcare providers about breastfeeding reducing their risk of breast cancer.¹

What you say makes a difference.

From this same study, women who knew breastfeeding reduced their risk of breast cancer **breastfed longer** than those without this knowledge (13.2 versus 9.3 months). And 36% of mothers said this knowledge affected their decision to breastfeed. Of those who did not breastfeed, 59% said that **awareness of risk reduction would have influenced their decision to breastfeed.**

¹“Learning, Life, and Lactation: Knowledge of Breastfeeding’s Impact on Breast Cancer Risk Reduction and Its Influence on Breastfeeding Practices.” Akaansha Ganju, Anupama Suresh, Julie Stephens, Marilly Palettas, Diana Burke, Laura Miles, K Lehman, R Rudesill, Maryam Lustberg, Seuli Bose-Brill, and Bhuvanawari Ramaswamy. *Breastfeeding Medicine* 2018 13:10, 651-656

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING REDUCING THE RISK OF BREAST CANCER:

1. **Tell patients** that breastfeeding reduces the risk of breast cancer—even if the woman is not of childbearing age. She is probably a friend or family member to women who are having children. She will pass this information along.
2. **Add lactation history to patient health history form**—this will raise awareness about the woman’s breastfeeding history and its impact on her lifelong health.
3. **Provide patients with the accompanying “Patient” handout**—this information may be personally useful and/or may be shared with others in their lives.

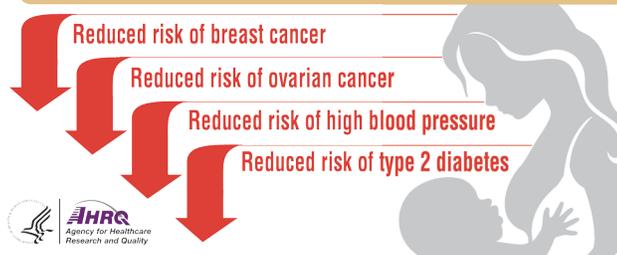
BREASTFEEDING IS ONE OF THE FEW THINGS YOUR PATIENTS CAN DO THAT IS KNOWN TO REDUCE THEIR RISK OF BREAST CANCER:

- Breastfeeding causes changes in hormones that can delay menstrual periods returning after giving birth.
- Fewer periods means less lifetime exposure to hormones like estrogen, which can cause breast cancer cells to grow.
- The more breastfeeding, the lower the risk –
 - ❖ For every 12 months of breastfeeding, the risk of breast cancer goes down by 4.3%.²
 - ❖ The 12-month time period could be with one child or the total time breastfeeding several children.
- Black women are more likely to get breast cancer and less likely to breastfeed than other groups -
 - ❖ Death rates from breast cancer are 39% higher for black women compared with white women across the nation³
 - ❖ Breastfeeding rates are 17% lower for Black women compared to white women in the U.S.⁴
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk for ovarian cancer, Type 2 Diabetes, stroke and high blood pressure

DO YOUR PATIENTS NEED HELP WITH BREASTFEEDING?

It’s as simple as entering their zip code in the Local Resource Directory from the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition at <http://ksbreastfeeding.org/local-resources/>. Breastfeeding support resources are populated on a map and they can choose the right support for them.

Benefits Associated with Moms Who Breastfeed



² Breast cancer and breastfeeding: collaborative reanalysis of individual data from 47 epidemiological studies in 30 countries, including 50 302 women with breast cancer and 96 973 women without the disease. *The Lancet*, Volume 360, Issue 9328, 187 - 195

³ American Cancer Society. *Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2017-2018*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, Inc. 2017

⁴ https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-socio-dem-2015.htm Accessed July 1, 2019

Breastfeeding Programs and Policies, Breastfeeding Uptake, and Maternal Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. Comparative Effectiveness Review No. 210. AHRQ Publication No. 18-EHC014-EF. July 2018



Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

ksbreastfeeding.org