

2010

# August

## Breastfeeding & Oral Health

Breastfeeding gives mom and baby a great start.



Yolo County. © Michal Venera/Yolo Natural Heritage Program.

The health benefits of breastfeeding are significant. Breast milk protects the baby from infections, certain chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity, and decreases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Experts recommend that babies be fully breastfed (no formula or other milk) for the first 6 months and continue breastfeeding for at least a year. Nearly 91% of Yolo County mothers begin breastfeeding their children in the hospital, but breastfeeding rates decline dramatically thereafter.<sup>22</sup> A study conducted by the Yolo County Health Department Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health program found that 56% of Yolo County mothers fed at least some breast milk to their infant 6 months after birth while 30% were fully breastfeeding.<sup>77</sup>

Certain demographic groups in Yolo County are less likely to be able to maintain breastfeeding for the recommended time. In Yolo County, significantly lower breastfeeding duration is found among Hispanic mothers, mothers residing in West Sacramento and Woodland, and lower income mothers.<sup>77</sup> Reasons for ending breastfeeding include early formula supplementation, maternal concerns about the quality and quantity of breast milk, cultural practices, and lack of support during the establishment of breastfeeding and upon return to work or school. The Community Breastfeeding Coalition of Yolo County meets regularly to collaborate on community-wide solutions that will support breastfeeding families.

Percent Women Fully Breastfeeding 6 Months After Birth by City, Yolo Co., 2006.<sup>77</sup>



Breastfeeding Awareness Month • National Immunization Awareness Month • Medic Alert Awareness Month

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 World Breastfeeding Week	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

### Children's Oral Health<sup>2</sup>

Baby teeth are important! Untreated tooth decay affects the development of the underlying permanent teeth and often leads to blocked eruption, drifting and crowding of permanent teeth. Cavities are the most common chronic condition in early childhood. Prevent cavities with these tips:

- Did you know that a parent's oral health affects their child's oral health? Get regular dental checkups and avoid sharing food that has been in your mouth.
- Fluoride is the most effective way to prevent tooth decay. If your local water supply does not contain fluoride, ask your dentist or pediatrician for their recommendations for you and your child.
- After each feeding, wipe the baby's gums with a clean gauze pad. Begin brushing your child's teeth when the first tooth erupts.
- Schedule your child's first dental visit by age 1.



### Fluoridation Facts

Fluoridation is a public health measure that benefits everyone regardless of age or socioeconomic status—not just those with access to dental care. Fluoridation has been studied for over 50 years and is known to be a safe, effective and inexpensive way to prevent cavities.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hails fluoridation as one of the top ten community health achievements of the past century.<sup>7</sup> The CDC further estimates that every \$1 spent on fluoridation saves \$80 in treatment costs for cavities in children.<sup>8</sup>

Approximately 67% of the U.S. population is served by fluoridated community water systems.<sup>8</sup> In California, a diverse range of cities now have fluoridated community water, including Arcata, Eureka, Fresno, Los Angeles, Roseville, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and Vacaville.<sup>25</sup> West Sacramento is currently the only Yolo County community that has implemented fluoridation. Get the facts about fluoridation at [www.cdc.gov/fluoridation](http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation).

- Yolo County Breastfeeding Support Warmline
- Yolo County MAMA Infant Feeding Assessment
- First Smiles: Fight Early Childhood Caries
- Community Water Fluoridation

Call 1-800-663-8685  
[www.yolohealth.org](http://www.yolohealth.org) (click on 'Health Statistics', 'Reports & Publications' on left toolbar)  
[www.first5oralhealth.org](http://www.first5oralhealth.org)  
[www.cdc.gov/FLUORIDATION](http://www.cdc.gov/FLUORIDATION) & [www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/index.asp](http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/index.asp)