



## **Lactation University Volunteer Support Program**

### **Trac 1: Prenatal Meetings**

#### **WEEK 1**

#### **Theme: You Are Amazing and So Is Your Milk**

Anatomy, Hormones, and Benefits of Breastfeeding

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Attendees will be able to describe how oxytocin causes myoepithelial cells to contract
2. Attendees will be able to identify the alveoli, lobules, and lobes
3. Attendees will be able to state when milk is produced during pregnancy
4. Attendees will be able to list 3 benefits of breastfeeding for mom and 3 for baby

#### **Education: Changes During Pregnancy**

The breasts will grow from the proliferation of milk cells during pregnancy. Breasts become tender. The body prepares to breastfeed by creating colostrum. The pregnant person has colostrum in her breasts by 16 weeks so it will be ready when the baby arrives.

#### **Education: Hormones**

Milk is kept in check by the high progesterone levels (the hormone that is high during pregnancy). Once the placenta is delivered, the progesterone levels drop, signaling the body to release the colostrum.

Once the baby arrives, the body operates on supply and demand. It is important to have the milk removed to signal the body to make more milk (autocrine vs endocrine). Ideally, the birthing person should practice skin to skin, but if that is not possible, pumping should be suggested and commence by 6 hours postpartum.

When the baby sucks, enjoys skin to skin, cries, etc. it causes the myoepithelial cells to contract and the Milk Ejection Reflex (MER) to happen. It takes approximately 90 seconds for milk to reach the nipple. (sidenote: this is why avoiding fast flow nipples and practicing paced-bottle feeding is important)

#### **Education: Advantages of Breastfeeding**

##### **For Mom/Parent:**

##### **Immediate Postpartum Benefits**

- Aids in expelling placenta
- Makes the uterus contract
- Less hemorrhaging/blood loss
- Promotes rest and recovery
- Weight loss (500 calories daily)
- Oxytocin Release (mood)
- Suppresses ovulation

**For Baby**

- Protection against chronic disease
- Childhood cancers
  - Acute lymphocytic leukemia 20% less with BF >6 months
  - Acute myelogenous leukemia 15% less with BF >6 months
- Atopic disease (dermatitis)
- Diabetes (Type 1 and 2)
- Childhood obesity
- Asthma
- Gastrointestinal and lower respiratory illness
- Neurodevelopmental benefits
- Lower sepsis and Necrotizing Enterocolitis in preemies
- Higher cognitive development scores
- Lower infant mortality and morbidity

**For others**

- Sustainable food source
- No waste
- Healthcare cost

**Suggested Teaching Techniques:** Broccoli, breast poster, draw breast anatomy, watch hormone video, aspirator, and FIL demonstration

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Handout on Risks of Not Breastfeeding, [Medela Breast Anatomy Picture](#)